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ABSTRACT

This volume of an annual collection presents 14 essays relating to instruction in the basic communication course. Essays in the collection are "Using Interactive Video Instruction to Enhance Public Speaking Instruction" (Michael W. Cronin and William R. Kennan); "Interactive Video Instruction for Teaching Organizational Techniques in Public Speaking" (Michael W. Cronin); "Writing as a Tool for Teaching Public Speaking: A Campus Application" (Karla Kay Jensen and Pat McQueeney); "Literacy Enhancement and Writing across the Curriculum: A Motivational Addendum" (L. Brooks Hill and Sandra L. Ragan); "Obstacles to Overcome in the Implementation of a Program to Reduce Communication Apprehension in the Basic Public Speaking Course" (Bruce C. McKinney and Stephen J. Pullum); "An Assessment of Panel vs. Individual Instructor Ratings of Student Speeches" (David E. Williams and Robert A. Stewart); "The Incorporation of Mentors and Assistant Basic Course Directors (ABCDs) into the Basic Course Program: Creating a Safety Net for New Teaching Assistants" (Nancy L. Buerkel-Rothfuss and others); "TA Mentoring: Issues and Questions" (1993 Speech Communication Association Top Paper by Pamela L. Gray and Martin G. Murray); "Meeting Certification Requirements for Teacher Certification through the Basic Course" (1993 Speech Communication Association Top Paper by S. Clay Willmington and others); "The Basic Course in Communication Theory: A Shift in Emphasis" (Warren Sandmann); "Stories as Instructional Strategy: Teaching in Another Culture" (Pamela Cooper); "The Role of Performance Visualization in the Basic Public Speaking Course: Current Applications and Future Possibilities" (Joe Ayres and Debbie M. Ayres); "Self-Confrontation and Public Speaking Apprehension: To Videotape or Not to Videotape Student Speakers?" (Craig Newburger and others); and "Computer-Mediated Communication in the Basic Communication Course" (Gerald M. Santoro and Gerald M. Phillips). (RS)

ED 378 631

Basic Communication Course Annual

Craig Newburger
Editor

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Craig Newburger

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Editor's Page

The *Basic Communication Course Annual* is now six years old. Norman H. Watson and Lawrence W. Hugenberg originally discussed the need for a national publication outlet focusing on introductory communication course research and pedagogy. American Press (Boston) liked their idea, and Larry became the annual's first editor (volumes 1-5). During Larry's editorship an editorial board comprised of individuals prominently involved with basic course research and/or administration was assembled, the annual developed an extensive list of individual and departmental subscribers, and the annual's articles became indexed in their entirety in the ERIC database.

I consider my editorship to be largely custodial — to help the baby continue to enjoy positive growth. One out of every six submissions received for this edition of the annual eventually was published. All of the published articles* went through at least two rounds of blind professional reviews (three or four reviews per submission each round). The authors normally received detailed constructive feedback to guide their revisions. The guidance was often provided by editorial board members already burdened by other editorial and publication commitments. I am grateful, as was Larry, for the time volunteered by the board members.

Craig Newburger
Editor

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* The SCA seminar papers were professionally reviewed separately.

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Michael W. Cronin and William R. Kennan

This article discusses the nature of interactive video instruction (IVI) and the potential benefits of IVI applications in supplementing instruction in the basic communication course. It describes the IVI programs in oral communication that are currently available, the equipment required to institute IVI, and details possible applications of IVI for instructors, students, and educational institutions.

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Michael W. Cronin

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L. Brooks Hill and Sandra L. Ragan

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Bruce C. McKinney and Stephen J. Pullum

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Nancy L. Buerkel-Rothfuss, Donn S. Fink and Charlotte A. Amaro

TAs face many demands and expectations in their often-conflicting roles. As a result, many TAs burn out not from lack of ability but from a lack of personal support. Some of the stress associated with the TA position may be reduced through the use of experienced peers who serve as mentors and by reliance upon assistant basic course directors (ABCDs). This paper describes a program designed to incorporate such peer support into a basic course program staffed by TAs.

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Pamela L. Gray and Martin G. Murray

The widespread use of graduate teaching assistants (TAs) in higher education has generated a search for techniques to improve the quality of teaching of TAs as well as enhance the entire TA experience. One such technique is mentoring. This paper attempts to accomplish four things: (a) delineate issues to be addressed, (b) share feedback from educators with mentoring experience, (c) present questions to guide decision making, and (d) provide a bibliography of literature on mentoring. The information presented comes from a questionnaire administered to basic course directors, a conference discussion on mentoring and the personal experiences of the authors.

1993 SCA Top Paper

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Joe Ayres and Debbie M. Ayres

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Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) for instructional support is being explored at a number of colleges and universities. In this paper the authors describe their successful application of CMC to the basic communication course and the lessons they learned for successful implementation of instructional CMC.

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Using Interactive Video Instruction To Enhance Public Speaking Instruction

Michael W. Cronin
William R. Kennan

Public speaking faculty must provide instruction in outlining, topic development, delivery, critical thinking, and a long list of other important topics to prepare students to construct and deliver effective speeches. In addition, time must be allocated for presentations and critiques. The time available in class limits the depth of cognitive instruction and/or the opportunity for performance and feedback. Interactive video instruction (IVI) enables teachers to move some of this cognitive instruction from the classroom into a self-paced learning laboratory. An IVI laboratory in oral communication allows students to learn, internalize, and practice knowledge and skills which are essential to classroom performance.

> Technology has the capacity to free courses from the constraints of time and, to some degree, space. Software is available and constantly being developed to introduce students to everything from the principles of public speaking to statistics. (State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, 1992, p. 34)

IVI can expand pedagogical opportunities in public speaking instruction. An IVI laboratory can provide oral communication instruction in contexts and at times that, currently, are not available in traditional instruction. It is important to note that IVI should not and cannot replace

classroom instruction. However, instructors using IVI should determine what is best done in the classroom (e.g., discussion, performance, critiques, etc.) and what instruction should be shifted from the classroom to the IVI laboratory.

> Technology is a powerful tool for instruction that does not require the continuous presence of a faculty member. But it has to be used correctly to free faculty *for* students, not *from* them. (State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, 1992, p. 7, emphasis in original)

This review, first, defines the distinctive features of IVI; second, assesses the effectiveness of IVI; third, describes IVI modules developed at Radford University that are applicable for public speaking instruction; fourth, provides information on equipment requirements and costs for implementing IVI; and finally, suggests strategies for integrating IVI into public speaking instruction.

WHAT IS INTERACTIVE VIDEO?

IVI allows students to interact via a computer with any combination of videotape, videodisc, film, slide, and graphic materials. In most cases, the student can view a segment of a module and respond to it. Based on that response, appropriate video/textual information is provided. Most IVI modules are designed to provide individualized, self-paced instruction. Rapid access to information is available based on the student's demonstrated understanding of topics or expressed interest in specific information. Although the degree to which modules are truly interactive can vary significantly, well-designed IVI modules adapt to the user's knowledge, ability, and interest by "branching" to remedial material, more advanced topics, or additional examples in direct response to the student's input (Gayeski & Williams, 1985).

One of the key attributes of IVI is the level of involvement that students experience. Instead of reading or listening passively, the interactive video user must respond actively to the program. Effectively designed IVI materials provide practice, feedback, repetition, motivation, and exposure to multisensory information. This method of instruction also can stimulate interaction and collaborative learning among students as they work together on a program (Chang, 1989; Cockayne, 1990; Dalton, 1990; Dalton, Hannafin, & Hooper, 1989; Noell & Carnine, 1989).

IVI programs can allow the computer to record students' responses and response times for many activities and questions. Instructors can use this information to gain valuable insights about student learning. This particular feature also opens "avenues for behavioral research and psychological assessment through less obtrusive measures, more vivid nonverbal stimuli, and adaptive, individualized testing" (Gayeski & Williams, 1985, p. 144). For example, printouts can provide information on each user's participation and performance including items selected for study, time-on-task, latency of response, correct and incorrect answers on practice exercises, and performance on competency tests.

IVI integrates computerized programmed logic with visual messages. Theorists suggest that visuals enhance learning by increasing learners' attention, enjoyment, and understanding of the content (Cronin & Cronin, 1992a). The most prominent theoretical support for visuals "is the dual-coding hypothesis, which suggests that humans possess both visual and verbal encoding mechanisms" (Hannifan & Rieber, 1989, p. 106). It appears that visual representations that are stored in memory contain more information and are better remembered than verbal representations (Baggett, 1989; Kozma, 1991). The visuals available in IVI can illustrate information central to the program, depict structural relationships mentioned in the text, or represent new content central to the lesson.

Students can adapt IVI to their learning styles. Most lectures, books, linear videotapes, and films are designed to be used in a linear fashion. IVI can be used in a non-linear fashion. Although not always desirable, students can move around in the program in response to their interest, knowledge, and learning objectives. Keefe (1979) indicated that some learners prefer auditory or verbal channels (older adults) and some prefer visual stimuli (teenagers and young adults). Well-designed IVI allows users to adapt the text, graphics, video, audio, animation, and slides available in IVI to their learning styles. For example, users can focus on the text, or the audio or the video accompanying the text, or they can attempt to integrate all three symbol systems to enhance their learning on a particular task.

THE PEDAGOGICAL IMPACT OF INTERACTIVE VIDEO INSTRUCTION

Recent empirical investigations support the conclusion that IVI generally enhances learning. Extensive meta-analyses reported significant effects of IVI on cognition, performance, and learning efficiency in a variety of situations and applications, primarily in hard skill areas (Fletcher, 1990; McNeil, 1989). Each of these meta-analyses found that IVI improved achievement and performance by about .50 standard deviations over less interactive, more conventional instruction. This improvement is roughly equivalent to moving the typical user from the 50th to the 69.2 percentile of achievement (McNeil, 1989). Cronin and Cronin (1992b) reviewed 33 recent studies that dealt with "soft skill" areas (such as communication skills, logical reasoning, foreign language, and sales training) and concluded that IVI produced

significantly greater cognitive and application gains than conventional methods of soft skill instruction.[1]

Clark (1985) and Cronin and Cronin (1992a) identified concerns about the research design and the lack of theoretical grounding in several IVI studies. Many of the recent empirical investigations of IVI in soft skill areas have addressed these concerns (e.g., failure to compare *similar* instruction across treatments, insufficient subjects, lack of random assignment of subjects (or matching), lack of control group). For example, Cronin and Cronin (1992b) identified 16 recent IVI studies comparing similar IVI and conventional instruction that included 80 or more subjects randomly assigned to treatment and control groups. Excluding IVI studies with major methodological flaws, the literature appears to support three conclusions about the pedagogical effectiveness of IVI that may be relevant to public speaking instruction.

First, in general, IVI appears to produce greater learning than linear video instruction (Chen 1990; Penaranda, 1989). Simply showing a linear videotape of a successful or unsuccessful speech offers no active participation in the learning process and no feedback concerning the acquisition of new skills or knowledge. On the other hand, IVI allows students to participate actively in specific aspects of the skill or knowledge being taught, and receive immediate feedback.

Second, users prefer IVI over other instructional methods. Gold (1989) reviewed 30 studies that compared IVI with other training methods and concluded that IVI enhanced learning and that participants preferred IVI over other training

[1]It is beyond the scope of this review to provide a detailed analysis of the empirical research regarding the pedagogical effects of IVI in soft skill areas. See Cronin and Cronin (1992b) for a detailed analysis of IVI research in soft skill areas including: (a) the instructional advantages of IVI over linear video instruction, (b) the instructional advantages of IVI over conventional instruction, (c) a methodological analysis of empirical research regarding learning outcomes from IVI, and (d) suggestions for theoretic and methodological refinements in IVI research.

methods. Preference for IVI may be partially attributed to the novelty effect of a new approach to learning. IVI users who are unfamiliar with the technology may experience increased motivation to learn due to the novelty effect. However, a novelty effect does not explain the significant instructional advantages reported for IVI when students used the technology for a substantial time period (Fletcher, 1990; Lookatch & Doremus, 1989). Furthermore, even if preference for IVI over traditional instruction is partially explained by a novelty effect, public speaking instructors can take advantage of this short-term effect. Students respond positively to this form of instruction and are likely to select it, if available, as a means of extending classroom instruction.

Third, the visual components of IVI enhance cognitive learning (Fletcher, 1990; McNeil, 1989). Visuals in IVI appear to produce increased enjoyment of and attention to the lesson. In most studies, visuals in IVI increased the comprehensibility of the lesson (Cronin & Cronin, 1992*a*). Higher levels of skill performance require active discovery and application on the part of the learner. Realistic video simulations in IVI provide "an ideal medium for learning from other peoples' learning, a quality that seems particularly appropriate when dealing with the development of interpersonal skills" (Hansen, 1989, p. 13). Students can use the video simulations available in some IVI modules in oral communication to compare their understanding of complex public speaking behaviors with video presentations of others' understanding of these same issues. For example, it may be more appropriate and more effective to use IVI to present video simulations of speakers dealing with and discussing speaking apprehension than to attempt to address these issues via live speakers in class.

IVI VIDEODISC MODULES APPLICABLE FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING INSTRUCTION

Two grants from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia totaling over $400,000, combined with additional support from Radford University, enabled the development of the IVI modules described below. The average development time for each of these modules was 1200 hours. The design team included a producer, content experts, a graphic artist, a computer programmer, and a video producer. The design team developed specific objectives, wrote content materials, organized the video production shoot, shot the video, edited the video, created graphics and animations, merged the video and computer text, sent the videotape to a production house to master the videodisc, merged the videodisc with computer text, developed supporting materials, and field tested the program.

Coping with Speech Fright

This module provides tutorial and simulation instruction in cognitive restructuring techniques to help students manage speech fright. Topics include the nature of speech fright, the rationale for cognitive restructuring, identification and validity testing of negative self-statements, replacement of negative statements with positive self-statements, and additional approaches to coping with speech fright. This module includes a workbook for student use. Empirical evaluations support the efficacy of this IVI module. The IVI program was as effective on dependent measures as virtually identical instruction presented by outstanding public speaking instructors via lecture/linear videotape. Students in the IVI treatment condition achieved significantly higher immediate and delayed cognitive test scores and significantly lower pre-to-post-test scores on the public speaking section of

the Communication Apprehension in Generalized Contexts instrument than did students in the control group (Cronin, Grice, & Olsen, 1994).

Constructing and Using Speaking Outlines

This IVI module provides tutorial and simulation instruction in constructing both conventional outlines and speaking outlines. The module was rated as enjoyable, effective, and easy-to-use in formative evaluations. Major topics in the constructing speaking outlines portion of this program include principles of conventional outlining (coordination, subordination, indentation, numbering, lettering); conventional outlining exercises; principles of constructing a speaking outline; and analysis of examples of speaking outlines. The latter portion of this IVI module provides tutorial and simulation instruction in using a speaking outline to deliver a public speech. Major topics include using speaking notes in simulated rehearsals for a speech, using notes when using a lectern, using notes when not using a lectern, conducting an effective rehearsal with speaking notes, and using speaking notes when giving a public speech. Empirical evaluations support the efficacy of this IVI module in teaching users to construct effective conventional outlines and speaking outlines. Students receiving IVI in "Constructing Speaking Outlines" achieved significantly higher application test scores than did subjects in the control and comparison groups (Cronin, 1992).

Developing Key Ideas: The Four S's

This module, along with an accompanying worksheet, provides tutorial and simulation instruction in effective organizational patterns for developing key ideas in a written or spoken message. Users learn to identify and define the four S's that are essential to developing each key idea in a message

(signpost, statement, support, summary); identify the use of each of the four S's in three sample speeches; and apply the four S's via worksheet exercises. Empirical evaluations support the efficacy of this IVI module. Students receiving IVI in "Developing Key Ideas" achieved significantly higher recall/application test scores than did subjects in the control group (Cronin, in press).

Critical Thinking: Supporting Your Ideas with Good Evidence

This module provides tutorial and practice instruction in understanding and applying tests of evidence. Users are motivated to complete instruction by means of a game format. Dual screens and channels allow students to adapt the module to their individual learning styles. Major sections of this module include guidelines for good evidence, guided practice in evaluating evidence, and a timed application game to assess learning.

Mission Possible: Listening Skills For Better Communication

In this module, students are provided with tutorials and simulations designed to improve listening. Users are motivated to complete instruction by means of a game format. Dual screens and channels allow users to adapt the module to their personal learning styles. Major topics include identifying bad listening habits, assessing personal listening behavior, overcoming bad listening habits, and enhancing active listening. Empirical evaluations indicated that students randomly assigned to IVI on listening achieved significantly higher cognitive test scores and significantly higher gain scores on the Watson-Barker Listening Test (video version) than did students randomly assigned to a control group (Cronin & Myers, in press).

Effective Introductions and Conclusions in Public Speaking

This module provides tutorials, simulations, and a worksheet to enable users to construct effective introductions and conclusions in public speeches. Dual screens and channels (visual, audio, and text) allow users to adapt the modules to their personal learning styles. The "introduction" portion of the module includes (a) the basic objectives of an introduction (gain attention, reveal topic, establish need to know, establish credibility, preview key ideas); (b) strategies for accomplishing each objective; and (c) video-based assessment of user understanding of effective use of these objectives and strategies in sample introductions. The "conclusion" portion of the module includes (a) the basic objectives of a conclusion (logical closure and psychological closure), (b) strategies for accomplishing each objective, and (c) video-based assessment of user understanding of effective use of these objectives and strategies in sample conclusions.

EQUIPMENT NEEDS FOR INTERACTIVE VIDEO INSTRUCTION

This section lists the least expensive hardware necessary for implementing this IVI. At present, the IVI modules will play only on the Macintosh platform. However, the IVI programs are being cross-developed for the MS-DOS platform and should be available by mid 1995. Information on both platforms is provided below. However, more powerful platforms capable of running more advanced multimedia applications should be considered. Institutions implementing IVI in oral communication will probably wish to run a number of other multimedia applications that require more powerful platforms. However, it is beyond the scope of this review to explore the software and hardware options involved in more advanced multimedia applications.

The Macintosh Platform

Item	Approximate Price
Macintosh II (including monitor, mouse, and keyboard)	$2,000 (March, 1994)
Videodisc player (RS-232)	$ 600
Monitor for videodisc player	$300
Interface cables	$100

The MS-DOS Platform

Item	Approximate Price
MS-DOS AT compatible computer (Order an AT computer which includes a VGA graphics adapter and compatible monitor, a high density disk drive, and an RS-232c serial port. A minimum 40 megabyte hard drive is required.)	$1,500 (March, 1994)
Videodisc player (RS-232)	$600
Monitor for videodisc player	$300
Interface cables	$50

CLASSROOM APPLICATIONS

The primary application at Radford University involves IVI in conjunction with a speaking laboratory. The goals of the IVI/speaking laboratory method are to improve the quality of public speaking instruction and to provide cost-effective instruction in oral communication to more students. The IVI/speaking laboratory method provides individualized, self-paced, active instruction (versus passive mass lectures) by using IVI to present almost 50% of (and eventually most of) the instruction necessary to prepare students for public speaking performance. Students use IVI outside the traditional classroom, thus expanding active learning opportunities in both time and space. The class instructor provides lecture material to supplement IVI and offers extensive feedback and evaluation of student performance in the speaking laboratory. Used in this manner, technology allows public speaking teachers to provide more performance feedback to more students.[2]

IVI modules may be used in various ways to supplement public speaking instruction. The following suggestions explore some of the contributions that IVI can make to teaching and learning in public speaking classes. Although the suggestions are categorized according to instructor, student, and institutional applications; each suggestion has implications for each category.

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[2]Although IVI has proven more effective than conventional methods of soft skill instruction and *individual* IVI units in oral communication have proven effective, the IVI *package* for public speaking instruction must be assessed empirically. We will conduct quasi-experimental studies to assess learning outcomes for public speaking students taught via the traditional lecture/performance method versus the IVI/speaking laboratory method using dependent variables such as nationally recognized tests of communication competence in public speaking.

Instructor Applications

Each public speaking instructor using IVI modules to supplement classroom instruction should adapt these teaching aids to his or her needs. Instructors should go through each IVI module to determine its applicability to their classes. Just as certain chapters in a textbook are omitted, corrected, or amended in a particular class; instructors should use only those IVI modules that support their instructional approach. Instructors should correct or amend instruction in any IVI module they choose to require (or recommend).

Instructors should provide opportunities for students to discuss learning outcomes associated with IVI. Instructors could schedule conferences with students to discuss the material outside of class or could schedule in-class discussions after all students have completed a particular IVI module. Where the demand on IVI equipment is greater than the ability of the facility to serve students, instructors can assign two or three students to work together on IVI modules. Alternatively, individuals could be assigned to use specific IVI modules and required to present class reports on the instructional content as one of their speaking assignments. Instructors can require students to write a paper describing the instructional content of specific IVI modules and evaluating the use of IVI as an instructional tool. This kind of activity provides important insight into student responses to the technology itself as well as the learning and skill development that is taking place.

Instructors who are absent from class may use IVI to provide effective instruction on selected topics during their absence(s) from class. This approach may be preferable to trying to find a colleague to cover the class and is generally preferable to using a linear videotaped lecture during an instructor's absence.

Instructors may use IVI primarily to attempt to help low achievers raise their performance in the class. IVI generally raises average achievement more equitably across all student achievement levels than does conventional instruction (Cronin & Cronin, 1992b; Fletcher, 1990). Low achievers may benefit even more than high achievers from the self-paced, individualized instruction; the immediate feedback; and the visual components of IVI. Instructors may wish to investigate theoretical explanations and explore the utility of specific IVI programs in oral communication for low achievers.

Student Applications

Students who have missed class lectures can use IVI relevant to that material to help them prepare for exams and speaking assignments. Rather than borrowing a classmate's notes that may be incomplete or inaccurate or arranging individual meetings with their instructors, absentees can use self-paced IVI at a time that is convenient for them.

Students who attended class lectures may need additional information or may wish to review lecture material. IVI may be used to provide additional information or review if it is similar in content to class lecture material.

Students can adapt IVI to their knowledge level and comprehension of a lesson. In a typical classroom it is usually impractical for the instructor to ensure that each student understands the material before moving on. However, the self-paced learning available via IVI allows students to repeat portions of the lesson that they do not understand. Furthermore, IVI programs can be written to require demonstrated understanding of particular material before a student is allowed to move on in the lesson.

Institutional Applications

Institutions may supplement mass lectures in public speaking courses with the self-paced, individualized instruction available through IVI. This approach could provide the economy of the mass-lecture approach and the adaptation to individual learning styles available through well-designed IVI.

Institutions could develop their own IVI modules designed to meet their specific instructional objectives. Institutions should support and reward software development.

> Institutions also need to generate the software to make technology-based instruction possible. The council suggests that in redesigning their faculty reward systems, institutions acknowledge faculty for software development and testing as they do now for research and scholarship. (State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, 1992, p. 34)

Institutions can encourage non-speech instructors who use public speaking exercises in oral communication across the curriculum to require their students to use IVI modules to help prepare for speaking assignments. IVI modules can provide instruction and feedback from communication experts at times convenient to student needs. Also, IVI makes it possible for students to have instruction and feedback available at times in the speech preparation process when it is most needed (when communication faculty may be unable to provide lectures to non-speech classes).

Institutions can establish (or expand) a public speaking laboratory available to any individual in the community or on campus. The IVI modules can be used to provide basic instruction on selected topics in public speaking to individuals unable to take a public speaking course without placing unreasonable demands on communication faculty.

SUMMARY

IVI offers a unique and affordable means of expanding the traditional public speaking classroom in time and space. IVI makes it possible for large numbers of students to experience self-paced, effective instruction outside the classroom. The major thesis of this review is that IVI can provide effective oral communication instruction to students outside the classroom, thus allowing more time in the classroom for performance, feedback, evaluation, and discussion.

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Interactive Video Instruction For Teaching Organizational Techniques in Public Speaking

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Research, though limited, generally supports the conclusion that effective organization of an oral message increases recall (Baird, 1974; Daniels & Whitman, 1981; Johnson, 1970; Thompson, 1967; Whitman & Timmis, 1975), attitude change (McCroskey & Mehrley, 1969), positive evaluations of the speech (Thompson, 1967), ratings of interest level (Thompson, 1967), and speaker credibility ratings (McCroskey & Mehrley, 1969). A survey of recent public speaking texts reveals that organization is seen as a key to speaker success and outlines and effective use of the four S's (signpost, statement, support, and summary) are seen as fundamental to organization (e.g., Beebe & Beebe, 1991; Grice & Skinner, 1993; Sprague & Stuart, 1988; Sproule, 1991; Verderber, 1991).

Although many academic disciplines use IVI to supplement traditional instruction, the communication discipline has been slow to integrate IVI. Limited software in communication and the absence of empirical data to support applications of IVI in communication have impeded the use of IVI in communication instruction.

To address these needs, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia awarded a $200,000 grant to Radford University in 1990 to develop and assess IVI modules in oral communication. The major focus of this grant was to determine if IVI modules could provide effective instruction in basic oral communication skills outside of class, thus freeing

instructors to devote more time in class to discussion, performance, feedback, and evaluation.

Many research studies comparing learning outcomes from IVI with learning outcomes from traditional instruction (e.g., lecture) have been conducted. Two recent meta-analyses (Fletcher, 1990; McNeil, 1989) reported that IVI produced significantly greater achievement and performance gains than traditional instruction. Additional *comparative* research has been discouraged for two major reasons. First, most IVI (including the IVI used in this study) is designed to supplement, rather than supplant, traditional instruction. Research regarding the relative effectiveness of IVI versus traditional instruction is of limited value in such applications. Second, due to the self-paced, interactive nature of IVI, it is impossible to ensure *exact equivalence* of the lessons in studies comparing IVI versus traditional instruction. Leaders in educational technology research have called for a new research focus. They have recommended that future research should investigate the instructional messages and strategies that can be conveyed effectively via IVI, rather than focusing on comparisons of IVI with alternative delivery systems (Clark & Sugrue, 1988; Matta & Kern, 1989; Reeves, 1991).

Thus, this investigation does not attempt to compare IVI with traditional instruction. This investigation assumes that competent instruction in organizational techniques in public speaking classes is effective. The purpose of this investigation is not to determine if IVI is superior to competent conventional instruction (partly because there are so many approaches to "conventional" instruction). The assumption of this investigation is that there is too little time in a typical public speaking class to provide all the cognitive instruction, speaking opportunities, feedback, and evaluation needed to produce competent speakers. Can some of this cognitive instruction be provided outside of class? The instructional goals for the IVI modules were to enhance students' cognitive learning regarding the organizational techniques taught in a

typical public speaking class. This research seeks to determine if the messages and strategies in the IVI modules on organizational techniques produce significant learning outcomes. If these IVI modules are effective in teaching students to construct speaking outlines and develop key ideas in a speech, instructors could modify their instructional approach to these topics. They could require students to use IVI on these topics outside of class and devote more time in class to discussion, performance, feedback, and evaluation.

This article describes the IVI modules in "Constructing Speaking Outlines" and "Developing Key Ideas: The Four S's" that were designed to teach the organizational techniques recommended by public speaking experts. It details the assessment of these modules and offers implications for using these IVI programs to supplement traditional instruction in public speaking.

IVI IN ORGANIZATIONAL TECHNIQUES

Two IVI modules were developed to teach basic organizational techniques in public speaking. The modules are designed to be used outside of class. They provide individualized, self-paced instruction and assume no prior knowledge of the subject matter. Each module can be completed in less than one hour.

The level III videodisc-based IVI "Constructing Speaking Outlines" lesson was divided into three parts: (a) principles of outlining, (b) application tests on basic outlining principles, and (c) principles of constructing speaking notes. The level III videodisc-based IVI "Developing Key Ideas: The Four S's" lesson included (a) definitions of the four S's (signpost, statement, support, summary), (b) computer-based video and text exercises to test students' understanding of the use of the four S's in speeches, and (c) a worksheet exercise in which

students could practice using the four S's in developing a key idea in a sample speech.

The multimedia IVI modules incorporate a tutorial approach including carefully designed orienting activities, questions, feedback, and review options to promote understanding. The multimedia approach promotes interest and understanding through humorous graphics, visual memory cues, dual-screen and dual-channel presentations, and exercises designed to enable students to apply IVI learning to the topic studied. Two-screen or two-channel display in IVI allows the user to adapt the program to his/her preferences for information display. Keefe (1979) indicated that some learners prefer auditory or verbal channels (older adults) and some prefer visual stimuli (teenagers and young adults). Users can adapt the text, graphics, video, audio, animation, and slides available in IVI to their information-display preferences on a particular task. The user can decide whether to listen intently to the voice-over, to listen while reading the summary, to try to tie in the visuals with the text, or to integrate all of these elements.

These IVI modules included messages and strategies that incorporated the following principles of effective instructional design. A brief discussion of each design principle and the messages and strategies used to achieve that standard are detailed below.

Provide for Appropriate Interactive Instruction

"In general, where the learner reacts to or interacts with the criterial stimulus, learning is facilitated, and that facilitation increases with the degree of learner activity or involvement" (Fleming & Levie, 1978, p. 138). Specific types of interactivity such as guided pathways for inexperienced users (Hoelscher, 1989) and instructional cues for complex interactive programs (Lee, 1989) help learners form accurate

interpretations, provide practice in important concepts, and provide relevant feedback (Schaffer & Hannafin, 1986).

A narrator encouraged users to complete the practice exercises and provided relevant feedback to users tailored to each specific response on practice exercises. Users were able to select from a variety of instructional and application options to help them form accurate interpretations of the instructional material. We provided menus and submenus to guide learners. However, the interactive options within each instructional segment of the IVI programs were limited to comply with the following design principle.

Provide for an Appropriate Combination of Learner Control and Program Control

Appropriate use of the learner-control options in well-designed IVI can enhance learning. Informed learner control by motivated learners generally increases the effectiveness and appeal of instruction (Reigeluth & Stein, 1983). Learner control is most effective when students have some expertise in the content area, are trained in the use of learner control, possess high aptitude and high inquiry, and are unlikely to skip important material or quit the lesson prematurely (Milheim & Azbell, 1988).

Total control of the IVI lessons by learners was inappropriate for our instructional purposes. Most users of these modules are expected to have moderate initial motivation to learn the material, little expertise in the content area, and little training in the use of learner control in IVI. We designed the IVI modules to allow users to select the instructional units within the IVI modules that were most appropriate for them (learner control); and yet be guided *within* each unit selected by the instructional design that was developed by the content experts (program control).

Provide Appropriate Visuals

Visual images available in well-designed IVI can enhance learning. Theorists have suggested that visuals enhance learning by providing increased comprehensibility of the content (Burwell, 1991); selective increases in learners' attention (Brandt, 1987; Miller & Irving, 1988); and increased enjoyment (Sewell & Moore, 1980).

We worked with our Telecommunications Bureau to develop professionally designed video, graphics, and animations to illustrate key instructional objectives. For example, in the "Constructing Speaking Outlines" IVI program, we included visuals of speaking outlines and video of speakers using speaking notes while practicing and delivering a speech. In the "Developing Key Ideas: The Four S's" IVI program, we included visuals illustrating each of the four S's and video of several speakers using the four S's in developing a point in a speech. Users can view various portions of each speech, attempt to identify which of the four S's is illustrated, and receive video feedback tailored to each correct and incorrect answer.

Provide Continuing Motivation

Even if learners are initially interested in learning, programs must be designed to enhance motivation to learn throughout the program. Continuing motivation can be enhanced by demonstrating the relevance of multimedia lessons to learners, providing motivating overviews to encourage exploration of various parts of the program, encouraging individual curiosity, and providing instruction that promotes learner perceptions of competence and self-efficacy (Kinzie & Berdel, 1990).

The IVI programs on organizational techniques in public speaking include attention steps designed to convince users

that the organizational techniques discussed in the program will help them become more effective speakers, will help them write more clearly, and will contribute to career success. Narrators explain the benefits of each major part of the programs. Short tests with immediate feedback are provided if users choose to skip major portions of the program. If users do not do well on the tests, they are encouraged to study relevant program materials. Each major section includes a series of application exercises that progress from relatively easy to moderately difficult applications. These exercises enable users to assess their understanding of the instruction while promoting perceptions of competence and self-efficacy through the easy-to-moderate degree of difficulty of practice exercises.

Provide Follow-up Discussion and Practice

Students vary in their ability and motivation to make the most of self-paced, interactive multimedia instruction. Many users require practice and additional instruction and guidance in applying the learning strategies in various situations and contexts. Structured learning activities accompanied by feedback and additional instruction from teachers allow "students to gain expertise in managing their own learning and can promote feelings of self-efficacy" (Kinzie & Berdel, 1990, p. 66).

The IVI modules encourage students to engage in speaking and writing activities to enhance their understanding of these organizational techniques. Students are encouraged to visit speaking and writing laboratories. These laboratories provide speaking and writing activities with feedback from trained tutors. For example, students are encouraged to give a practice speech and receive feedback from tutors on their use of speaking outlines and the four S's. In addition, students may videotape their practice speeches and use the videotape to analyze their organizational techniques. (Because follow-up

discussion and practice could confound IVI treatment effects, no delayed measures were used in the studies detailed below.)

ASSESSMENT METHOD

Subjects

Ninety-one college students at a middle-sized, comprehensive university in the southeast region served as subjects. Male subjects comprised 51% of the sample and female subjects made up 49%. The subjects in the treatment group for study 1 served as the control group for study 2, and vice versa.

Procedures and Design

Students from non-speech classes in economics, political science, health, and marketing either volunteered or were required to undergo IVI. These subjects received no instruction in developing key ideas or constructing speaking outlines in class prior to the study. Subjects received no extra credit for their participation in this study. However, because all participants were required to present either a debate or an oral report as a major class project, most were motivated to learn more about oral communication.

Students randomly assigned to group A (the control group for study 1 and the treatment group for study 2) received approximately 30 minutes of individual IVI in "Developing Key Ideas: The Four S's." This instruction provided no information on constructing speaking outlines. Students randomly assigned to group B (the treatment group for study 1 and the control group for study 2) received approximately 35 minutes of individual IVI in "Constructing Speaking Outlines." This instruction provided no information on developing key ideas.

The subjects in the treatment group for study 1 served as the control group for study 2, and vice versa. This design controlled for a Hawthorne-type effect of providing IVI to the treatment group only by providing IVI on an unrelated topic to the control group. Because the control group in each study received "placebo" IVI on a topic unrelated to the treatment under investigation, this design meets the standard treatment versus no treatment requirement.

Participants in both the treatment and control conditions were shown how to use the IVI program by a trained student worker and were left alone to complete the lesson. Students in the treatment and control groups completed a sixteen-item recall/application test on constructing speaking outlines, a sixteen-item recall/application test on developing key ideas, and a formative evaluation of the instruction immediately after they received the instructional material. These measures were randomly ordered to control for an order effect. No delayed tests were used in this study. The variety of courses and instructors included in this study introduce uncontrolled variables that would confound the long-term effects of IVI on dependent measures used in this study.

Dependent Measures

No standardized tests are available to measure *only* the specific skills addressed in these IVI programs (constructing speaking outlines or developing key ideas). Thus, a sixteen-item test was developed to measure recall/application skills regarding constructing speaking outlines. For example, multiple-choice questions about a partial outline were designed to identify correct (and incorrect) use of key principles including subordination, coordination, lettering, and numbering. Likewise, a sixteen-item test was developed to measure recall/application skills for developing key ideas. For example, open-ended questions were included to assess knowledge of the four steps to developing a key idea (signpost,

statement, support, and summary); the proper sequence of these steps; and correct identification of the function(s) of each step in developing a key idea. These tests avoided literal replication of the questions embedded in the instructional treatment. The tests were validated for instructional convergence by three independent speech professors. The split-half reliability of the tests, based on Pearson Correlation Coefficents, was .891 for developing key ideas and .885 for constructing speaking outlines.

RESULTS

Study 1: Constructing Speaking Outlines

The means and standard deviations of the recall/ application test scores for the treatment and control groups are presented in Table 1.

ANOVA results indicated that students using IVI on constructing speaking outlines achieved significantly higher

Table 1
"Constructing Speaking Outlines": Means and Standard Deviations of Test Scores

Condition	Test Score max. = 16		
	n	*M*	*SD*
Trt. (voluntary-IVI on spk. outlines)	25	10.72	1.74
Trt. (required-IVI on spk. outlines)	19	10.21	1.90
Control (required-IVI on unrelated topic)	22	7.82	2.74
Control (voluntary-IVI on unrelated topic)	25	7.76	2.07

test scores than did students in the control group ($R^2 = .30$, F [2, 88] = 18.80, $p < .0001$). The group differences accounted for 30% of the variance. There was no significant difference on test scores between volunteers and required participants (see Table 1).

Study 2: Developing Key Ideas

The means and standard deviations of the recall/application test scores for the treatment and control groups are presented in Table 2.

ANOVA results indicated that students using IVI on developing key ideas achieved significantly higher test scores than did students in the control group ($R^2 = .78$, F[2, 88] = 154.40, $p < .0001$). The group differences accounted for 78% of the variance. There was no significant difference on test scores between volunteers and required participants (see Table 2).

Table 2
"Developing Key Ideas":
Means and Standard Deviations of Test Scores

Condition	Test Score max. = 16		
	n	*M*	*SD*
Trt. (voluntary-IVI on dev. key ideas)	25	13.96	1.46
Trt. (required-IVI on dev. key ideas)	22	13.14	2.44
Control (voluntary-IVI on unrelated topic)	25	4.96	2.96
Control (required-IVI on unrelated topic)	19	4.95	2.32

Formative Evaluations

Immediately following instruction, students completed a series of self-report items to evaluate the instruction. Each of the items was rated on a scale of 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = undecided, 4 = disagree, and 5 = strongly disagree.

Because the means for each item were virtually identical for the formative evaluations of the constructing speaking outlines IVI and the developing key ideas IVI, the average of the two means is reported here. Students reported that they enjoyed the IVI treatment (M = 1.85). Students felt that the video portions of the IVI helped them understand the material (M = 1.79), made the presentation more enjoyable (M = 1.72), and made the presentation more interesting (M = 1.65). Students indicated that they would be capable of using the instruction to construct speaking outlines or develop key ideas (M = 1.73) and reported moderate to high effort to learn the material in the IVI lesson (M = 2.53). Most students reported that they were undecided about how well-versed they were in using computers in general (M = 2.80), did not find it difficult to learn via the IVI (M = 1.58), and had not used IVI previously (M = 1.15). Three items assessed student perceptions of the responses (feedback) provided by the computer in the IVI program. Most students felt that the feedback informed them about constructing speaking outlines or developing key ideas (M = 1.77), did not attempt to control their behavior (M = 2.35), and was believable (M = 1.96).

DISCUSSION

These studies were designed to investigate either the effects of IVI in "Constructing Speaking Outlines" or "Developing Key Ideas" on students' learning and formative evaluations of the learning experience. In each study, recall/

application test scores of the randomly assigned treatment group were compared to those of a randomly assigned control group receiving "placebo" IVI on an unrelated topic.

The results are summarized as follows. Students using the IVI programs on "Constructing Speaking Outlines" and "Developing Key Ideas" achieved significantly higher recall/application test scores than students in the control group. Most students found the IVI enjoyable, easy to use in learning the material, useful in learning to construct speaking outlines or develop key ideas, and motivating.

The positive affective responses of students to these IVI modules may encourage instructors to explore using IVI to supplement traditional instruction. Some may fear that students who are unfamiliar with IVI would not enjoy using such technology. Most students reported that they had not used IVI previously; yet most of them reported positive affective responses towards using IVI. This study did not compare affective responses to IVI versus other novel instructional methods. However, Gold (1989) reviewed 30 studies that compared IVI with other training methods and concluded that participants preferred IVI over other training methods.

The apparent efficacy of these IVI programs in teaching students about constructing speaking outlines and developing key ideas is consistent with research on the effects of IVI in teaching cognitive restructuring techniques for coping with speech fright (Cronin, Grice, & Olsen, 1994). It is likewise consistent with research on the effects of IVI in related soft skill areas (Cronin & Cronin, 1992). The instructional messages and strategies in these IVI modules appear to be effective in teaching students to construct speaking outlines and develop key ideas. These findings are not intended to imply that IVI is more effective than classroom instruction in teaching organizational techniques. If IVI is capable of providing effective instruction in these areas outside of class, instructors could use limited class time to do things that can be done only in class. Rather than lecturing on material in the

IVI programs, instructors could cover other material or devote more time to student speaking activities.

Although the combined instructional messages and strategies in these IVI modules appear to be effective in teaching students to construct speaking outlines and develop key ideas, further research is needed to isolate those factors and examine their relative impact. For example, researchers may wish to isolate the effect of video versus no video on learning outcomes, the association between students' perceived level of learner control and learning, or the association between the actual motivational level of the IVI lessons and student recall. Such research would contribute to theory building and more effective design of IVI in oral communication.

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Writing as a Tool for Teaching Public Speaking: A Campus Application[1]

Karla Kay Jensen
Pat McQueeney

All basic communication courses seek to improve students' oral communication skills while also deepening their understanding of the theoretical principles and processes underlying effective communication. Writing, whether in the form of formal assignments or informal in-class strategies, can help achieve these goals. (See, for example, Emig (1977) and Larson (1983).) A written assignment emphasizes some formal aspect of the course such as a speech. Informal writing, which stresses learning rather than a completed product, corresponds to those activities that students would use as preparation for a formal oral communication activity — e.g., brainstorming for a topic, outlining, keeping a log of speech-preparation activities. The effectiveness of this oral/written relationship is enhanced when the written component corresponds to the course's broader oral goals.

At our school, a midwestern university, Speaker-Audience Communication is the basic course which fulfills the oral communication requirement. As stated in the course's supplemental textbook, the public speaking course emphasizes "developing basic competence in informative-expository speak-

[1]Some material in this paper was presented in oral form at the Annual Convention of the Central States Communication Association, Oklahoma City, April 9, 1994.

ing. Fundamental principles for increasing clarity and improving organization, language, and delivery are stressed and practiced" (Hummert & Jensen, 1992, p. ix). This course is designed to emphasize knowledge as well as skills. To that end, 25 students in each section give five speeches and write one formal three-to-six page paper.

In the past, students who were enrolled in the basic public speaking course considered the three to-six page paper to be an artificial component of the class — something "on paper" that could be graded, though largely irrelevant to the class itself. That attitude may have been inadvertently suggested by the graduate teaching assistants who taught the course. Often apprehensive about dealing with the writing assignment, many instructors freely admitted to a lack of confidence and experience responding to writing. They were even more reluctant after reading student papers, some of which were written less satisfactorily than expected or hoped.

To address these concerns, the Communication Studies basic course directors and the Writing Center staff at our school have collaborated to offer the teaching assistants an oral/written communication strategy that supports the larger goals of the course. This paper is a summary of the rationale and strategies that we offer to the Communication Studies teaching assistants. We will include a discussion of both informal writing strategies and formal writing assignments which promote learning of the course material.[2]

WHY USE WRITING IN THE BASIC COURSE

Writing is a logical complement to the basic communication course for at least two reasons: 1) writing's "multi-

[2]We appreciate the contributions of Carol Benoit in developing the Process Analysis Project and of Vickie Christie in developing the Speech Evaluation assignment.

representational" nature--in the sense that the brain, the eye, and the hand(s) operate in conjunction (Emig, 1977, p. 125) — makes it an ideal means of integrating theoretical concepts, and 2) writing's distinctiveness from speaking (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 98) makes it an appropriate enhancement to oral communication strategies. Through complementing the oral with the written, instructors can "employ writing to emphasize and clarify the unique features of oral communication while also teaching its similarities to the written mode," thereby leading students "to a richer appreciation of the challenges and intricacies of oral communication" (Hummert, Jensen, & McQueeney, 1993). For example, in formal written assignments instructors may ask students to evaluate another's speech, log and discuss the process of speech making, or engage in a comprehensive self-critique. Informal writing may emphasize the broader communication goals, promote learning of the course material, give students regular opportunities to write, and help students focus their ideas as they prepare to write the formal paper and essay exam questions. Informal strategies benefit instructors as well. Teachers can offer this training to students without committing themselves to extensive responding and evaluation. (Excessive responding is counter to the goals of these strategies.) By merely skimming these writings, instructors will find out prior to test or speech time what students have learned and which concepts need re-teaching. In addition, informal assignments constitute samples of student writing and, thus, can indicate to instructors the level of guidance that will be necessary when they assign formal papers. (For an example of such a writing technique, see Weaver and Cotrell, 1985.)

TYPES OF INFORMAL WRITING

Informal writing works equally well in class or outside the classroom. These strategies are especially useful because they

take little time and minimal (if any) grading effort. Short writing assignments such as those suggested below give major writing assignments a context in the basic communication course.

Many of the more useful writing-to-learn strategies are written extensions of standard oral communication practices. Therefore, the written aspect will reinforce oral goals. For example:

- **Brainstorming** is frequently an oral strategy. Jotting down ideas that arise through brainstorming — either individually or as a group — will reinforce the concepts being generated. Brainstorming may then be taken an additional step: students can group the ideas and label each group as a further step toward reaching a topic for a speech or a paper.
- **Peer response** is a natural part of a communication studies class. If students prepare for their oral response by using writing — either jotted responses to questions or a brief writing — they are likely to be better able to focus their comments and more willing to participate in discussion.
- **Short writings** effectively focus a class on a particular topic, help students summarize class work, or cause students to discover where their reasoning breaks down. Students respond to a question or to a prompt from the instructor. Many of these writings need not be graded; instead, the material from them can be used in class discussion.
- **Journals or logs** provide unique opportunities for students to have a structured way to work with course material as well as with ideas for and reactions to speeches. Journal entries may follow a single assignment made at the beginning of the semester or may vary throughout the course by teacher and student preferences.

- **Outlining** is a standard preparation for speech-making, but one that creates anxiety for many students. However, if they are asked to outline informally as well as formally, with focus on outline functions as well as form, they may come to value the process.

These informal strategies increase students' writing opportunities and stimulate class discussion. Also, they help prepare students for long writings without unduly burdening the instructor because shorter assignments can be evaluated with different strategies from those used for more formal papers.

Responding to Informal Writing

All writing does not have to be graded. Shorter assignments, such as the ones described above, need not be evaluated as polished products; they simply help students begin to see the value of writing for clarifying and developing their ideas. Out-of-class informal writing can be read for content only: Did students answer the question correctly or understand the main idea of the chapter? The same can be done for in-class short writing: Does it show that students are actually working on the assignment and making progress towards its completion? To check whether students are writing on topic during timed writings, instructors can walk around the room and read over shoulders, ask a few students to read theirs aloud, pick up a few at random each time, or collect all but read them only to see if most students understand the material. Similarly, journals or logs can be checked (a few each day or week) simply to see that work is completed.

Few or no comments need be written on any of these writings; teachers can respond with a simple check, plus, or minus, or with a point system. For example,

+	✔	—
This really moved our discussion forward	Good beginning. Say more in discussion to clarify.	I'm not clear how this pertains to _____ (the subject).

When students turn in extra credit work, engage in personal response writing, or write in journals, the instructor's response might use ± (points), C/NC (credit, no credit), or a letter grade with comments:

+3 Glad you found the video useful for understanding the power of language in speechmaking.

NC Mark the journal pages you want graded, and hand it in again next Friday.

C+ You gave many hints about the conflict in values between you and your parent, but I remained unsure of its connection with the concepts we have been discussing in class and how this relates to your speech topic.

MICROTHEMES: BRIDGING INFORMAL AND FORMAL WRITING

Microthemes — short writings (usually on 5" x 8" note cards or half-sheets of paper) that are actually fully conceptualized, condensed essays — constitute a sort of bridge between informal writings and the more formal papers. (For a full discussion of microthemes, see "Microtheme Strategies for Developing Cognitive Skills" in Bean, Drenk, and Lee, 1982.)

The microtheme is brief, but this form requires a small amount of writing *after a great deal of thinking.* Because microtheme writing is rigorous writing in restricted space, students must plan carefully to argue successfully, just as they would when preparing to deliver a speech. Microthemes are useful in both large and small classes because they involve limited writing (and, therefore, less grading) while

forcing maximum thinking, thus placing responsibility with students.

Microthemes promote summary writing, thesis defense, data analysis, and quandary exploration. (Bean, Drenk, and Lee, 1982, pp. 27-38)

- **Summary-Writing** microthemes ask students to summarize a topic, argument, or theme, a task which helps students understand and state objectively other points of view.

  Sample: Explain why too-many or too-graphic fear appeals may be ineffective in a persuasive speech.

- **Thesis-Support** microthemes ask students to generate effective support for a thesis the instructor presents. This demands active thinking and possibly research.

  Sample: Support or refute this statement: A detailed outline makes a successful speech.

- **Data-Provided** microthemes challenge students to generate the controlling idea from given data. This requires logical and abstract thinking as well as the ability to see connections between different facts.

  Sample: [Instructor provides a list of five types and uses of supporting materials.] How can supporting materials such as these add credibility to your speech?

- **Quandary-Posing** microthemes demand that students solve and then explain a puzzle. This type exercises abstract reasoning skills.

  Sample: Couple X discovers three years after they have been told that their newborn baby died that the child is living. Couple Z had legally adopted the baby, unaware Couple X had been deceived. Couple X sues for custody. Reason through who should raise the baby. Describe how you would use such reasoning in a persuasive speech.

The microtheme is a chance for students to explore a single concept or issue. But the narrowness of focus doesn't mean that intellectual rigor is sacrificed. On the contrary, because students must concentrate and refine, these writings can promote intellectual growth. Informal writing also will give students planning and pre-writing strategies that will be useful as they write the major-paper assignment. Since many students have operated from the maxim that more is better, they may be reluctant to believe that less is what instructors expect. Therefore, establishing the format for microthemes is important. Students need to understand that the size restrictions are not negotiable. For students to develop the skill to write with the rigor required for microthemes, they may need procedural guidelines such as the sample Microtheme Intructions to Students handout included in the appendix.

Microthemes place responsibility for learning with the student. They can be an optimum opportunity for learning with only minimal written responses required of instructors. The responding strategies used for short writings work well for microthemes too. When informal writing is a natural part of the communication process and when structured writing experiences such as the microtheme are commonplace, students will be more confident writing their formal assignments.

TYPES OF FORMAL WRITING

When formal written assignments are designed to complement the oral communication activities of a class, the end product is likely to enhance the understanding of the theory and process of public speaking. In this basic public speaking course, a formal writing assignment offers students an opportunity to employ an alternative mode of communication to address directly underlying principles and processes that otherwise might otherwise remain tacit to students. The three

most frequently used assignments are summarized below, and the texts of the assignments, truncated for publication purposes, are included in the appendix. We include these assignments as an impetus for curricular discussion among our colleagues who teach the basic course.

- Students keep a log of their speech-creating process to help reflect on the steps and pitfalls in speechmaking, from choosing the topic through delivering the speech. Then, students use the log as a resource to write a formal paper analyzing the experience.
- Students research and present a speech which is taped (audio and, preferably, video). After time has elapsed, they use the tape to critique the speech. Some instructors encourage students to incorporate suggestions from peer critiques of the student speech as well.
- Students view another person's speech on videotape or in person. They evaluate and critique the speech with a focus on the speech structure and delivery in addition to content.

Formal writing is typically evaluated in the basic public speaking course with a level of detail comparable to an instructor's evaluation of a speech. Just as a speech checklist serves as a guide for students as they prepare speeches and instructors as they evaluate them, writing checklists devised for each of the assignments described above serve as guides for both students and instructors. (The sample checklist following Paper #3 in the appendix was designed from the instructor's public speaking checklist.) They help basic course instructors become comfortable responding to writing because they are tools similar to the speechmaking checklists teachers already are accustomed to using. For students, they reinforce the important points of the assignment. In addition, they become a sort of contract between students and teachers regarding the criteria by which the paper will be judged.

Finally, with a multi-sectioned course such as the one at our university, checklists help standardize evaluation procedures among instructors.

Whether instructors use checklists, comment on the paper itself, or do both, they respond as expert *readers* in Communication Studies rather than as English teachers. They are guided by questions such as these: How does a paper "work" as writing in communication studies? Is it clear? Is it sufficiently developed? Is the organization appropriate? As expert readers, instructors know that every error need not be marked. Based on the goals for a particular assignment (incorporation of course terminology, for example), an instructor can mark a paper selectively to reflect students' attainment of those goals. If errors of grammar, punctuation, or mechanics interfere with students' clear communication, instructors may note those simply by circling a few or even by writing an end comment such as, "The unclear sentences obscure your meaning." Just as student public speakers are expected to deliver speeches with a sensitivity to public standards, students who write in the public speaking class are expected to develop strategies to edit papers to reasonable public standards. (See Larson (1983) for a discussion of responding to discipline-specific writing.)

The combination of oral communication and written communication are integral to students' learning processes. The key to incorporating writing assignments effectively in the oral communication basic course is for instructors to link them to specific educational goals and to define those goals clearly for themselves and for their students as well. (Hummert, Jensen, & McQueeney, 1993) Through this integrated approach to the teaching of oral communication, students will have the opportunity to deepen their understanding of communication theory, public speaking skills, and the similarities and differences in the oral and written modes of communication.

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APPENDIX

SAMPLE MICROTHEME INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS

1. Begin by analyzing the type of assignment you are being asked to address. Here are the more common types of microthemes:
   - **Summary-Writing** microthemes ask you to understand and state objectively other points of view.
   - **Thesis-Support** microthemes ask that you engage in active thinking and possibly research.
   - **Data-Provided** microthemes challenge you to think logically and abstractly as well as see connections between different facts.
   - **Quandary-Posing** microthemes demand that you exercise your abstract reasoning skills.
2. Formulate a response. (Verbal brainstorming with others is a good way to begin.) When you write out the response, ignore length constraints.
3. After you have written a natural response, assess the draft. Is there a clear point you are arguing? Does every sentence add to the argument? Is every example the best available?
4. Set the writing aside for awhile, and then re-read it critically after re-reading the assignment. What is extraneous to the argument and, therefore, can be cut? What additions will clarify your argument? What words need refining for tone and clarity?
5. Type the theme on a 5" x 8" note card or generate a document on word processor using half a sheet of standard paper.
6. Run a final check: Does the microtheme address the assignment directly? Is the writing concise without

having gaps in reasoning? Does the paper conform to microtheme length conventions? Does the paper adhere to established format?

PAPER #1. PROCESS ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT

INSTRUCTOR TIPS

ABSTRACT

Students keep a log (journal) of the experiences they have as they prepare a speech for class presentation. Using the log and their experience, they write a four-six page paper analyzing the process of developing an informative speech.

STUDENTS NEED

- time to do the two projects (the preparation for the speech AND the Process Analysis Project).
- illustrations or examples of the instructor's expectations for log entries. For example, they can be shown what a Daily Record entry might look like, and some may not know how to brainstorm.

INSTRUCTORS CAN HELP BY

- prompting students to budget time effectively. Students will procrastinate on the log unless instructors ask for it to be submitted prior to the paper being written. After being checked off (the instructor merely confirms that entries have been made), it can be returned to the students to use as a resource as they write the paper.
- changing the assignment handout if they wish to change the nature of the log. Modifying a detailed written assignment by oral instructions is confusing to students when they write the paper.

PROCESS ANALYSIS PROJECT

This project is designed for you to examine the process of preparing and presenting your informative speech in order to determine what you need to concentrate on for future presentations. This project consists of two parts:, a log (to be turned in the day you give your speech) and a four-six page paper.

KEEPING A LOG

COMPONENTS OF THE LOG

The log gives you a structure to comment on the process by which you are preparing your speech. You will find it helpful as you write your paper. Keep your log in a notebook. For clarity, label each entry with date, entry number and title. The minimum number of entries will include:

1. **Daily Record** Keep an on-going daily tally of how you allocated your time preparing for this presentation. Create three columns:

Date	Progress on Speech	Approximate Time Used

   List each date, even if you did nothing. "NONE" in the second and third columns is acceptable occasionally because you won't be working on the speech each day. So is a listing of distractions that kept you from working on the paper: "got the "flu," for example.
2. **Brainstorming** Use at least one of the pages to brainstorm your way to a topic.
3. **Selection Rationale** Explain in one page why you selected this topic. Why is it of interest to you? Does it relate to other courses you are taking?
4. **Selection Justification** Explain in one page why the topic is appropriate for the type of speech to be given.

Why is it important that others know about this topic? Why should the audience care?

5. **Organization Justification** Explain in one page why you are choosing to shape the speech as you are. First, identify your organizational strategy: Is it primarily spatial? Topical? Chronological? Then, how does that choice best suit the topic? The audience?
6. **Annotated Bibliography** Create an annotated bibliography of your four (4) sources for your speech. An annotated bibliography consists of the bibliographical citation (this assignment will use MLA Style) and concise information about the text.

PROCESS ANALYSIS PAPER

Analyze the process of developing the speech in a four-six page paper. Your job is to explain to your instructor what you have learned from the process of developing this speech that can be applied when you attempt similar tasks in the future. (Clearly the log will be an invaluable resource as you write this paper.) The paper will divide itself into three sections.

Introduction

Describe the process of reaching the point of giving your speech. What decisions had to be made? (Be certain to include the topic and the organizational strategy.) How much time was spent? What interferences intervened? How much did class lectures or texts assist you? This portion of the paper can be drafted prior to giving the speech. Although the instructor has access to your log, she will not have read it prior to reading your paper, or seeing your speech. Therefore, use the log as a resource.

Analysis

(*Analysis* and *Transfer* should be written *after* you have given the speech.) You will have already given your presentation by the time you write this analysis. Now that you have the benefit of knowing the final product, **evaluate the process you went through as you prepared for this presentation.** How effective was the process you used? Think about the decisions you made regarding the substance of the presentation as well as the process of your preparation. (Refer back to your log.) What worked well? Did your texts assist you in your preparation? How about class lectures? Why? What would have worked better had different decisions been made?

Transfer

Show that you understand the implications of your analysis by **transferring that evaluation to your future speech-preparation strategies.** Given what you have written in the analysis section, what do you need to do as you prepare for oral presentations in the future? What shifts need to occur in decision making strategies? Why? Which strategies worked extremely well and, therefore, should be kept? What should be your personal time-management strategies for future presentations, given what you now know about your own preparation/presentation strengths and weaknesses? This section gives you the chance to show that you can think about and evaluate your preparation for oral presentations.

Style and Presentation

This four-six page typed paper is due at the beginning of class one week after you give your speech. Double-space the manuscript. Add a title page and cover sheet. Identify the sub-sections by inserting subheadings. First person (I/me) is appropriate for this paper as is active rather than passive voice. Do not disrupt clear communication with your instruc-

tor. Communicate in writing with the same commitment to clarity, directness and conciseness that you are working toward achieving in oral communication. Proofread carefully and look for grammar, punctuation, and spelling problems.

PAPER #2. SPEECH EVALUATION ASSIGNMENT

INSTRUCTOR TIPS

ABSTRACT

Students write an evaluation of the substance of their own speech, working from a tape to distance themselves from the presentation.

STUDENTS NEED

- sufficient opportunity and time to review their speech on tape.
- exposure to appropriate communication theory prior to writing the paper (ideally, prior to giving the speech) in order to incorporate accurate terminology.

INSTRUCTORS CAN HELP BY

- encouraging students to avoid procrastination. Giving an interim deadline--asking students to submit an index card indicating the working thesis statement, for example--will help.
- providing a mechanism whereby students can receive input from their peers on their speech.
- presenting a model analysis to demonstrate to students how to prioritize the topics they will analyze.
- encouraging students to read published reviews of speeches.

SPEECH EVALUATION PAPER

We often evaluate the speaking of others, either formally or informally. This assignment asks that you distance yourself from one of your presentations to evaluate your own speech. **Working from the video or audio tape of your speech, write a three-five page paper evaluating it.** Tapes will be returned to you _____ (date). The three-five page typed paper will be due _____.

PREPARING TO WRITE THE PAPER

You will, of course, want to consider the speech as a whole presentation. However, focus your discussion on the substance of the speech. Here are some questions to help you think about substantive issues. (These questions should be used as a guide to start your thinking rather than as a paper outline.)

- How appropriate, complete, and effective was its content?
- What support did you provide for contentions? What worked well? What could be improved?
- How complete and effective was the development of information? The use of facts and statistics? How accurate was the citation of sources?
- How systematically was the speech organized?
- How clear was the outline that emerged as the speech was presented?
- How effective was the sign posting in the introduction?
- How directive was the thesis of the speech?
- How adequate were internal transitions as guides to the listener?

Take notes as you analyze your taped speech using these questions as well as others that you would incorporate if you

were evaluating another's speech. Also draw from your class notes and text. What specific **concepts from the text and class notes** should be included in this discussion? What **communication terminology** should be included?

WRITING THE PAPER

Evaluating something of your own presents special challenges. The timing of this assignment helps you create a distance, as does the use of tape. Thinking about yourself in terms of your reader is equally important. For example, feel free to use "I" as you write of yourself as the speaker, but keep in mind that your reader (your instructor) should not have to go back to the tape to understand the points you are making. The organization and development of this paper will vary due to what each writer is evaluating about the speech; however, these suggestions may be helpful.

Introduction

Remind your reader (your instructor) of the topic of the speech and of the these that you are going to argue. That is, *what are you going to **show or prove** about your speech in this paper?*

Body

Organize this paper as you wish, but attend to a coherent order just as you would in an oral presentation. Likewise, use transitions to guide the reader, As you develop the paper, concentrate on an in-depth evaluation of the speech. Both you and the reader have heard the speech; however, you should keep in mind that you are bringing unique insights into this evaluation. What you regard as significant may not immediately be apparent ot the reader. Therefore, draw specific examples from the speech to illustrate the points you are trying to make. Do not assume that your reader will be willing to go back to the tape to clarify a point you are making. Fur-

thermore, demonstrate that you understand this speech in terms of the larger picture of this type of speech in general. That is, draw from what you have learned from class and your text to incorporate communication concepts and terminology as you discuss your speech. Incorporate issues of delivery as appropriate to complete your evaluation.

Conclusion

The conclusion of an evaluative paper ties together the analysis that has formed the body of the paper into a summary statement of evaluation. How effective was this as an informative speech? If this speech were to be given again, what should be the same? What should be changed? Why? What did you learn from this that could be applied to future speech-making?

Style and Presentation

[Similar to information in Paper #1.]

PAPER #3. COMMUNICATION ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT

INSTRUCTOR TIPS

ABSTRACT

Students attend a speech and then analyze it in a four-six page paper, using questions included in the assignment as well as communication theory from class discussion and the text.

STUDENTS NEED

- sufficient opportunity and time to hear and respond to a speech.

- exposure to appropriate communication theory prior to writing the paper (ideally, prior to attending the speech) in order to incorporate accurate terminology.

INSTRUCTORS CAN HELP BY

- encouraging students to avoid procrastination. One strategy to monitor speech attendance is to prompt students to commit to a specific speech by requiring them to turn in an index card with the speech giver, the topic, and the date.
- showing students how to prioritize the topics they will analyze by working through the discussion questions on the assignment sheet in a model analysis (perhaps using a transcript or a video tape) led by the instructor.
- encouraging students to read published reviews of speeches. These newspaper reviews can be clipped and attached to the paper. This strategy is a way to avoid plagiarism by incorporating the most likely source into the assignment.

THIS ASSIGNMENT CAN BE MODIFIED

- to a Hybrid course assignment by modifying the questions to include interpersonal issues. Or Interpersonal Analysis Paper topics could be set against a speech,, especially during an election.

COMMUNICATION ANALYSIS PAPER

Many speakers come to our university or our town each semester. This assignment asks that you **observe one speaker and then apply communication theory to your analysis of the presentation in a four-to-six** page paper. You will be at a point in your course work around _____ to

work critically with the presentation. The paper is due by_____. As you are watching for speakers of interest to you, please consider the rest of the class by bringing to class pertinent information on campus and local speakers.

Select a speaker or topic of interest to you. Attend the presentation prepared to observe and take notes. Choose a speaker who is giving a single presentation, rather than one who is speaking as part of a panel. (Class lectures or sermons do not qualify as speeches for this assignment.) When possible, check with your instructor before attending to confirm that the speech is appropriate for this assignment. If a speaker of interest is scheduled before _____ (date), you must clear the presentation.

ASSIGNMENT

Using your notes from the presentation, information from readings and class lectures, and a speech evaluation form, write a paper that critiques the speech. Your paper should include a thorough discussion of how well the speaker met the speech evaluation criteria. You may want to use an evaluation form (similar to what we use in class) as a guide to organizing your paper. Be sure, however, to include all relevant points (speaker, speech, occasion and audience), **making reference to principles and course terminology** wherever applicable. Avoid *reporting* what the speaker said. Instead, *analyze* the speech, **with a focus on style and presentation,** using theory as learned from class and your text.

PAPER

While the structure of your paper will vary, the following suggestions may help you to develop a critique.

Introduction

Introductory information will, of course, include the speaker, the speech, the occasion, and audience. In addition,

in the introduction you will focus on the argument you plan to develop in this paper. You can do this by formulating a clear thesis statement. that signals that you will be addressing not only *what* the speaker said but also how he or she approached the audience. The *how* leads you to discuss style and presentation. Remember, developing an effective thesis statement involves asserting what you are going to SHOW or PROVE (look at the underlined section in the bold sentence). By focusing in with this sort of statement, you can delve into the speech, applying theory to make your points.

Body

Use these questions to help you analyze the speech critically.

1. Did the **Introduction** get your attention? State the thesis? Preview the main points? State credibility?
2. Were **transitions** used? What kinds? Were they effective?
3. What kind of **supporting materials** were used? Were they well cited? Were they credible?
4. Were **visual aides** used? What kinds? Were they used well?
5. Was the speech **organized** well? What kind of organizational pattern was used? Were the main points clear, each supported with evidence or examples?
6. What about the **delivery?** Was it extemporaneous? Memorized? Did the speaker use good eye contact? Effective paralanguage and kinesics? How did the speaker's personal artifacts contribute to his or her credibility?
7. Did the speaker consider the **audience?** How rhetorically sensitive was the speaker?

8. What could the speaker have done in these areas to **Improve the speech?** W.,y?

The issues these questions raise need to be addressed in the course of your paper. However, the emphasis and detail you give to a particular topic (the bold words) depends on the significance of the topic to the speech that was given and to the thesis statement you are arguing. Support your points by appropriate examples, taking care to avoid generalizations and to be balanced in your presentation by being factual. Incorporate Communication Studies terminology when appropriate.

Conclusion

Question 8 above is your natural move toward your conclusion. With that question you are discussing what the speaker could have been done better (or what is so impressive that others should adopt). Throughout the paper you have been presenting the evidence to support your argument. Now, in the conclusion bring your reader around toward accepting what you contended in the introduction.

Style and Presentation

[Similar to instructions in Paper #1.]

COMMUNICATION ANALYSIS PAPER CHECKLIST

Use this checklist as you write. Your instructor will use it to evaluate your assignment.

Assignment Stipulations

____ Speaker chosen is appropriate for assignment.
____ Critique focuses on style and presentation of speech.

Introduction

____ Speaker, speech, occasion, audience identified.
____ Thesis focuses into an argument appropriate to assignment.

Body

____ Issues on the following topics are discussed as prompted by the analysis questions:
  ____ Introduction
  ____ Organization
  ____ Supporting materials
  ____ Delivery
  ____ Visual Aides
  ____ Audience
  ____ Improvement in speech.
____ Course terminology is incorporated accurately.
____ Topics emphasized are appropriate to speech and thesis.
____ Examples are appropriate to points being made.
____ Presentation is balanced by being factual.
____ Argument is logically organized.

Conclusion

____ Argument's logic is carried into conclusion
____ Reader is brought around toward accepting argument.
____ Closure is established.

Style — The paper is

____ Clear. (Words are precisely chosen and defined when necessary — organization is signaled early and is maintained logically throughout; transitions are used to signal direction of argument.)
____ Concise. (Main points are discussed without undue repetition; generalizations are avoided.)

_____ Mechanically accurate. (Spelling is accurate; grammar adheres to standard conventions; punctuation is accurate.)

Presentation — The paper is

_____ four-to-six pages in length, typed, double-spaced.
_____ headed with a title, sub-divided with headings if appropriate.

Literacy Enhancement and Writing across the Curriculum: A Motivational Addendum*

L. Brooks Hill
Sandra L. Ragan

The purpose of this brief paper is to supplement the preceding article with complementary information drawn from a Ford Foundation Literacy project and the national writing across the curriculum "movement." In their article Jensen and McQueeney provided a rationale for using written assignments in the basic communication skills course, identified some informal writing-to-learn tactics for use in such a course, suggested some ways to help instructors use one type of written assignment, and then gave us some very specific written assignments developed at their university. Their article serves well to guide our use of writing in the basic oral communication course. Beyond this more limited perspective is a vast national effort to persuade all teachers in all disciplines to become more proficient in the use of written exercises and to encourage a broader conception of literacy as an essential cornerstone of education. What follows references more directly this national context and urges all of us to

*Dr. Michael Flanagan, Department of English, University of Oklahoma, was a recipient of a Ford Foundation Literacy Grant on which the co-authors had an opportunity to work. We appreciated that opportunity during 1988-1989 and wish to express our appreciation for his successful enlistment of us into the cause of increased student literacy.

accept this broadened perspective for all of our courses, not just the basic course.

A perennial complaint of many faculty is that students do not write well. If the attribution literature is correct, most of these faculty will probably blame someone other than themselves for this problem. An especially popular group to blame is our colleagues in English departments whose culpability often is captured in equally irrational claims: "They spend too much time teaching esoteric literature and not enough on teaching rhetorical skills" or perhaps more caustically "They try to teach creative writing before the students know the essentials of informative writing." Whatever the version you have heard, the simple upshot is they are not doing their job properly, and we are all suffering the consequences. Perhaps as a response to this interdisciplinary warfare, a fledgling movement emerged among teachers of rhetoric and those faculty who reasoned wisely that we are all at fault for the questionable literacy of our students. Especially during the late seventies and early eighties writing-across-the-curriculum (WAC) became a major national effort to address these concerns. At universities throughout the country special writing centers were established and workshops to help all faculty better use written assignments became commonplace. Conventions of the Modern Language Association (MLA) became a popular forum for advancing this cause.

At many enlightened universities the central administration strongly endorsed the ideas of WAC, taking steps to encourage promised solutions. One of the co-authors remembers as a graduate teaching assistant receiving a widely distributed memorandum from the highest academic office of the university acknowledging that literacy was a joint responsibility of all teachers at the university and underscoring the importance of using his mandate to work on student writing skills in every course. Incidentally, he partially exonerated the English faculty from sole responsibility for the current state of student writing skills. Other administrators funded

special centers, local faculty workshops, and faculty attendance at national workshops on the subject. From the wave of WAC activity came an extensive literature with innumerable constructive suggestions and the stimulus for some related "movements." Among the movements spawned are the languages across the curriculum which encourages foreign language acquisition in the treatment of other subject areas and communication across the curriculum which sometimes includes WAC and adds oral communication and media enhancement of pedagogical efforts. For a successful example of the former check with Dr. Wendy Allen and others at St. Olaf College, and for the latter consider the work of Dr. George Grice and others at Radford University.

During the eighties we also encountered increased concern for other general skills which students seriously needed. Among these were creative decision making and critical analysis skills, often lumped together into creative decision-making, but not necessarily. The convergence of these collective concerns led the Ford Foundation to encourage proposals for development in students of a broadened conception and improved skills of literacy. In early requests for proposals (RFPs) they provided a broad but eloquent definition which underscored the convergence of these general concerns and which provided a blueprint for the subsequent projects they supported: literacy, they defined, is "speaking with logic and force, writing with clarity and grace, analyzing with critical cogency, measuring ideas and events by values, and creating through imagination and synthesis." The co-authors of the present paper participated in one of these Ford Foundation Grants in which "reading and writing as empowering mental processes" was the primary focus. From this experience we offer some observations as a complement to the preceding article.

First, and very practically, the published literature on WAC and the expanded concepts of literacy are very broad, very rich, and ultimately very repetitive. We offer one specific

source which we found especially useful: Lois Barry of Eastern Oregon State College prepared a relatively short booklet (65 pages) in which she offered *The Busy Professor's Travel Guide to Writing Across the Curriculum* (EOSC, 1984). Because she is strongly committed to the realization of her ideas and goals, she has a very liberal reproduction policy; so, any of us can use her work reasonably without problems. If you have trouble locating a copy, contact either of the co-authors, and we will share ours with you. From this most useful point of departure one can easily locate in the broader literature any special help you might need. This booklet was current at the time of the grant in which we participated and other more recent sources may be more readily available; but, whichever you choose, get one and save yourself the challenge of recreating the wheel.

Two serious sets of obstacles confound efforts to use writing in communication classes: one set derives from instructors and one set from students. Consider first the ways we obstruct our own efforts. The reasons faculty across all disciplines provide for not using more written assignments are remarkably similar and often reflect an unjustifiable recalcitrance. Presuming a general awareness of these reasons, we propose a few simple answers: If one will learn some of the options available, they will quickly discover that writing assignments do not necessarily increase the work load but instead can decrease instructor investment of time and energy. The skillful use of peer evaluations can reduce time expended and quickly evaluated short assignments can so increase the quality of longer assignments that the overall time expended is reduced, and instructional effectiveness increases. In more technically oriented courses where writing may be unexpected, such assignments can impose an alternative way of thinking about the activity and thereby enhance learning. The public speaking assignments of the preceding article and exercises for broadcasting classes, including the practicums and internships, are useful cases at point. Class

size is often an obstacle, but short written assignments can be graded quickly and sub-group projects can reduce the magnitude of the task. To succeed with writing in the communication curriculum, we also need to train our teaching assistants to use these techniques from the beginning of their preparation as teachers. This places responsibility on the course coordinating faculty to help assistants learn to do so. Finally, we must recognize the limited knowledge of some faculty who do not wish to reveal their ignorance or ineptitude. We need to help them acquire a repertory of writing assignments and to try them. This may require strong encouragement from administrators but is possible when the advantages are shown and the ineffectiveness of some traditional approaches revealed. In a time when greater premiums are at stake for increased effectiveness of undergraduate instruction no one can afford to neglect such a powerful repertory of pedagogical techniques to enhance subject comprehension and general literacy.

The second set of obstacles comes from the students. Only last week at a selective admission small liberal arts and sciences university one of the co-authors had a student with roughly 1300 SAT scores tell him that the communication course (persuasion) was not an English course. Such a narrow minded attitude can be checked by instructor explanation at the beginning of the course and university-wide attention to the collective responsibility of all teachers for literacy skills. At this university the presence of a required writing workshop and a writing center operated by the English Department, no matter how effective, contributes to the perception that writing is a concern of only one part of any total curriculum. Students also do not understand the substantive relationship of the content and its form of expression. If we in communication are not teaching this essential relationship, then we are also missing a good opportunity to justify the study of communication as a substantive discipline, as well as to help encourage writing assignments as a useful pedagogical

technique. Contrary to an inaccurate though widespread student viewpoint from the sixties, students really do not know exactly what they need to know. That is one reason why they or their parents or others pay us to teach them. Part of our responsibility is to help them realize how writing forces self examination, better critical analysis, and improved formulation of their thinking and ideas. With repetitious use of written assignments they come to realize the effect these techniques can have on their acquisition not only of our subject matter but their more general grasp of self and life as well.

Not the least of concern in this brief statement is the identification of assignments available. Barry's booklet and numerous other sources provide a wide array of prospects, and the preceding article identifies some of the informal and a few formal techniques. What we have found especially useful is the group development among teaching assistants and faculty of their exercises. Ask each person to identify the formal and informal writing techniques they use in one or more courses. Gather these ideas and then assign one or two people to each technique and have them develop a handout for each prospect parallel to the exercises in the prior article. In this fashion one can accumulate a useful set of locally generated products. From the broader literature compile a longer list and assign those unused locally for experimental use in different classes. Then arrange for the teachers to share their responses to the effectiveness and problems using each technique. If they work well, then develop them more thoroughly as suggested for the locally generated techniques. In this fashion one can create a socially reinforcing approach to the generation of a set of useful exercises. Sometimes the more staid faculty will be reluctant to try something different. Try to convince them it is their leadership responsibility to help the TAs and the junior faculty. This may permit them through involvement to persuade themselves.

We are providing here only a general framework with somewhat vague guidance. We know the rich particulars are readily available elsewhere. If we can tease instructor interest to pursue these options, they will likely get into this general movement to enhance student literacy. In this addendum essay we have focused on writing assignments. With increased success with these assignments we believe instructors will expand into other dimensions of the broadened conception of literacy. Among the directions for extension are some rich lodes: We desperately need to teach our students how to read texts more effectively. One of the co-authors approaches course textbooks as a communication strategy exercise. In so doing the students learn to approach the text as a critical analyst operating at a meta-level where one outlines the chapters, asks why the author did this at that time or place, and how the effort relates to other parts of the text and to the course and its general subject matter. Other directions involve creative thinking. One co-author has a rather typical modeling paper assignment for the basic course, but the last part of the paper asks students to locate a far-fetched metaphor to capture some aspect of the communication process. Students love the challenge, and their explanations of spider webs, flowers, and DNA as analogies of communication reflect wonderful analysis. These examples merely scratch the surface of opportunity for us to enrich our potential instruction.

In retrospect we acknowledge the somewhat informal and speculative appearance of this complementary addendum to the preceding article. What we wanted to accomplish was acknowledgment of the rich and broader context of the writing exercises used in the basic course at University of Kansas. They are on the right track and doing so admirably. But much more is available. Our task was to share some of our reactions based on a Ford Foundation Literacy Grant which opened our eyes to the vast potential of our collective responsibility for improved education through a broader conception of literacy.

We hope instructors will accept the challenge implicit in this short essay and begin to share their success with all of us who are collectively dedicated to a better world through communication education.

Obstacles to Overcome in the Implementation of a Program to Reduce Communication Apprehension in the Basic Public Speaking Course

Bruce C. McKinney
Stephen J. Pullum

Writing in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech* in 1928, Wayne Morse declared that the goal of the basic speech course was "the development of behavior habits which will enable the student to adjust more satisfactorily to his environment" (p. 543). Few would argue that this goal exists today. However, the plethora of research on communication apprehension (CA) over the past twenty-five years consistently demonstrates that CA may interfere with one's ability to realize this goal. The number of students that suffer from communication apprehension has been identified at approximately 20 percent of the population (McCroskey 1977; Phillips & Metzger, 1973). Furthermore, students who suffer from CA are at-risk academically; they have lower GPAs and are less likely to complete college than their low CA counterparts (Chesboro, McCroskey, Atwater, Bahrenfuss, Cawelti, Gaudine, Hodges, 1992; McCroskey, Booth-Butterfield, & Payne, 1989). Richmond and McCroskey (1992) report that 50 percent of high CAs dropped a course in public speaking prior to the first speaking assignment, and those high CAs who remained were likely to be absent on days that they were scheduled to speak.

Most of the texts used in the basic public speaking course are of limited help to the student who suffers from CA asso-

ciated with public speaking. As Pelias (1989) notes, most of these texts suggest one of three approaches to overcoming public speaking anxiety: (1) think positively, (2) relax, and/or (3) seek speaking opportunities. Pelias appropriately concludes, "With a few exceptions, the advice given is safe, but most likely, ineffective and/or impractical" (p. 51). Few college students have received proper instruction in positive thinking or relaxation techniques. Additionally, most students will not seek speaking opportunities outside the classroom. In a response to the numerous problems associated with CA, some universities have developed special sections of the basic communication course. Though it might seem an easy task to some, the implementation of such programs presents many obstacles that need to be addressed. This article focuses on methods to remedy these obstacles.

Each author has worked at a university that allowed them to design and instruct a special section for students suffering from CA.[1] This course provided students the opportunity to learn public speaking skills in a relatively nonthreatening situation. In each program, the students learned the same instructional material as students in the regular sections, and their transcripts did not reflect the fact that they had enrolled in a special section — thereby allowing the students to avoid the stigma that might be attached to such a course.

In this article we will address obstacles that instructors may encounter when developing a public speaking apprehension course, including the following: (1) whom to enroll, (2) international students, (3) the "cake" or "crib" course perception, (4) problems with student expectations, (5) what instruc-

[1]The institutions offering CA or "reticent" programs in which the authors participated include The Pennsylvania State University, Indiana University, and James Madison University.

tional method to employ, and (6) problems related to using therapeutic techniques without a license.

WHOM TO ENROLL

The problem that one first encounters in such a program is the question of whom to enroll, an issue that needs close scrutiny. If students who are not apprehensive are placed in a special section for CA's, two problems arise: (1) they waste valuable time and resources, and (2) they do not receive instruction appropriate to their needs. Instructors should be careful to confirm the problem of CA before they try to solve it through instruction in a special section (Booth-Butterfield & Booth Butterfield, 1992).

Students who should not be in the course often attempt to enroll because other sections of the course are closed. If permitted to enroll they become a threat to students who truly need the course. Teachers who permit low CAs to enroll defeat the purpose of a communication apprehension class. Beatty (1988) points out that "students engage in a form of social comparison at least in terms of public speaking ability. If the speaker perceives the audience as more competent than himself or herself, the result is increased anxiety" (p. 34). Further, Beatty argues that "apprehensive communicators appear to enter public speaking with a self-imposed subordinate status which in turn heightens their performance anxiety" (p. 34). Although he is not arguing specifically for a special section of public speaking for those high in CA, certainly such a course would help reduce interpersonal factors that induce and increase CA if the right people are allowed to enroll in the class.

Neer (1982) recommends that multiple screening and selection procedures be used so that treatment programs reach those they are intended to help. The PRCA (McCroskey, 1977) has stood the test of time as a reliable measure of CA.

However, as Neer and Page (1980) argue, it may not be in the best interests of the students to simply assign them to special sections of the basic course on the basis of a high score on the PRCA. One problem with the interpretation of PRCA scores is that some individuals who may receive a score indicative of extremely high CA have no trouble facing an audience; they simply interpret the arousal of their central nervous system differently from those who receive similar scores yet avoid public speaking whenever the opportunity arises.

Another method of enrollment selection is the screening interview, which has been shown to be a reliable method for student selection (Sours, 1979). Using the screening interview might seem an impossible task for instructors who teach at universities with multiple-sections of the basic course. However, it has been employed at Indiana University since the early 1980s, and at the Pennsylvania State University since 1965 where there are 80-100 sections of the basic course per *semester*. Kelly (1989) has explained the procedure used in the Penn State program and Kelly and Keaten (1992) provide the most recent documentation for its effectiveness. In these programs, not all students in the basic course are interviewed, only those who feel that they might have a problem with CA. During the first day of class students are informed of the sections of the basic course for apprehensive communicators. Students then voluntarily report for an interview to determine if this course will meet their needs. Graduate TA's routinely interview about 100 students per semester, a small portion of those in the basic course. Clearly this can be labor-intensive, but provided the necessary resources it is effective.

One popular way of selecting students for screening interviews is to administer the PRCA the first day of class. Students may be told that if they score one or two standard deviations above the mean on the PRCA *and are concerned about* their CA, they may then report for a screening interview. Neer (1982) makes the suggestion that students not be told that they are taking the PRCA, but a "Communication

Inventory" to avoid the negative self-labeling that might result when a student is told he scored as a high apprehensive. In the course of the screening interview, some students will admit that they are not overly apprehensive about public speaking but simply are looking for a section to round out their schedule. During the interview, the instructors should ask the student why he or she wants the course. Additionally, instructors should look for nonverbal signs of apprehension. Booth-Butterfield and Booth-Butterfield (1992) provide a summary of research on nonverbal behaviors associated with CA that interviewers should be attentive to:

eye contact avoidance or shifty gaze
less talk time or fewer words spoken
dysfluencies and hesitations
incomplete, ill-timed, unnatural gestures
restrained or rigid posture
awkward pausing
excessive movement such as pacing shifting or rocking
repetitive mannerisms and adaptors
nonresponsive facial expressions
problems with breath control

Instructors should also ask the students if they have prior speaking experience. Many students are unaware that their apprehension at giving that first speech is a normal reaction experienced by most beginning speakers regardless of CA level.

Unfortunately, there are no fool-proof ways of knowing who is telling the truth and who is merely trying to bluff his or her way into a section of public speaking. In one instance experienced by the authors, one supposedly apprehensive student began interviewing the interviewer, giving a well rehearsed monologue about how he could never communicate effectively. Ultimately the decision of whom and whom not to enroll rests with the instructor. A method one of the authors

used in the screening interview was to tell students who appeared to be bluffing that there was actually *more* work in the special section.[2] This never presented a problem to those who feared public speaking; anything to them was better than having to stay in the regular section of the course.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Another obstacle, closely related to the first, is that communication apprehension classes may be overrun by international students who do not feel that they can compete with American students. When this occurs, it obviously limits the number of openings for students suffering from CA. When space is tight, international students should not be permitted to enroll in the course when their anxiety about performing in public is associated with their mastery of the English language. In these cases, an English-as-a-Second-Language course may be more appropriate. Further, many international students *can* compete with American students in regular sections of public speaking but have an unrealistic sense of their abilities. Many could (and should) be directed into regular sections of public speaking by the instructor. During the screening interview, a good question to ask is this: "Is this a problem you have had when you speak in your native language?" This will help instructors discern whether to enroll an international student into the class.

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[2]At The Pennsylvania State University, students who opt to take the special section of the basic course for reticent students (known as option D) must complete written work for each speech that is not required for the other sections of the basic course. This work includes a two-to-three page paper assessing their communicative strengths and weaknesses, a written "goal analysis" based on behavioral objectives on how they will perform their speech, and a post-speech reaction paper assessing their performance. Additional information about this procedure may be found in Kelly's (1989) description of this program.

THE "CAKE" OR "CRIB" COURSE PERCEPTION

A third obstacle that arises in teaching a "special" section of public speaking is student perception that the class is a "crib" course. Students mistakenly believe that if one is communicatively apprehensive, then he or she must *not* be as bright as other students. And if a class is full of slow learners or academically inferior students, then instructors cannot possibly expect as much of them as they would from students in a regular section of public speaking. While research shows that there is no correlation between intelligence and CA (McCroskey, Daly, & Sorensen, 1976), getting students to understand this is occasionally a problem. As Booth-Butterfield and Booth-Butterfield (1992) conclude, "A person's latent intellectual ability says nothing about whether they like to communicate" (p. 80).

Instructors should tell students during the pre-enrollment screening interview that even though they are communicatively apprehensive, they are not necessarily intellectually inferior. Doing so may discourage enrollment from students looking for an easy course. Students should also be informed during the first day of class that there is no correlation between intellectual ability and CA. Not only does it help to dispel a myth about the course, but it also begins to build self esteem in students who may feel that they are in a class for inferior individuals.

Another concern with respect to "crib"-perception is faculty reaction to a special section. A handout was sent to all faculty at one author's former institutions. It was returned with the following comments:

> This is as bad as educational methods junk!
>
> This is not an academic course at all! It's remedial!
>
> I resent being asked to 'sell' such pop [sic] to student, & won't!

Such attitudes by faculty may contribute to many students' negative perceptions of CA programs, particularly if a teacher denigrates the programs in front of his or her classes. While some faculty might question such a course, research strongly supports the need for this type of program since 20 percent of the college population experiences CA (McCroskey, 1977). As Booth-Butterfield and Booth-Butterfield (1992) state:

> While everyone is entitled to an opinion on the matter, the facts are not subject to debate. CAA directly and indirectly produces a wide variety of preventable academic, social and work deficits (p. 101).

To help combat negative reactions of skeptical colleagues to special sections of public speaking, any announcements and/or department meetings describing these sections should indicate that students will have to complete the same assignments with the same rigor as is expected of all students in the basic course.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Another obstacle often encountered teaching the communication apprehension section of public speaking is unrealistic student expectations. In other words, students often have the mistaken impression that teachers are miracle workers who will somehow rid them of their anxieties. The authors stressed that they could not do this and that students should, therefore, not expect it of them. Instead, students were told that the way to cope with their CA would be through understanding basic principles of public speaking and communication apprehension and by working hard.

If students demonstrate trait apprehension, they should be referred to the counseling center on campus. Students who, in rare moments, cry or faint during their speeches or who

simply refuse to stand in front of the class to speak may have problems that are beyond the expertise of those teaching a special section of the basic course. Instructors may find themselves repeatedly saying that their job is to help students complete Public Speaking 101 as painlessly as possible. If a student refuses to present a speech, there is little that the instructor can do but to refer the student to outside help.

Instructors should assure students that they may not eliminate totally their fear of public speaking, but by the end of the semester, they will have accomplished three goals: (1) they will have learned principles of effective speaking; (2) they will have gained a greater understanding of why they are apprehensive about speaking; and (3) they will have learned ways to cope with their anxieties. "Coping" is the operative word here. A realistic approach develops strategies for coping with anxiety. In the final analysis, this may be the best that students can expect to achieve. They may be unable to face an audience without being apprehensive; however, the course will empower them with more confidence when they next speak in public.

WHICH INSTRUCTIONAL METHOD TO EMPLOY?

Since the early 1970s, many instructional techniques have been developed and modified, all of which are identified with the research of various scholars, including traditional systematic desensitization (McCroskey, 1970; 1972; 1977); skills training or "rhetoritherapy" (Kelly, 1989; Phillips, 1977; 1991); cognitive restructuring (Fremouw & Scott, 1979), and visualization (Ayres & Hopf, 1985; 1990; 1993).

Since each of the instructional methods are based on different underlying causes of a person's inability to communicate when the need or desire arises, choosing the best instructional method is not as easy as it may appear. Kelly (1982)

describes the traditional use of the various instructional methods:

> When the nature of the problem is assumed to stem from inadequate communication skills, an intensive skills training is advocated. Second, when the problem is viewed as anxiety based, relaxation therapy is the proposed solution. Finally, cognitive therapy is advocated for those whose problem is presumed to stem from inappropriate cognitions about self and communication (p. 109).

All methods have empirical support for their success (Kelly & Keaten 1992; McCroskey, 1972; Fremouw & Scott, 1979; Ayres & Hopf, 1990), though there is still debate about which method to use for the individual student. Perhaps the best resource for determining which method to employ may be found in Ayres and Hopf's (1993) text *Coping with Speech Anxiety*.

In an attempt to help students cope with speech anxiety, the authors gradually introduced students to public speaking. After basic public speaking instruction (skills), students then participated in group discussions of two or three people. Next, the size of the group was gradually increased over one or two assignments before a group of five to six students. Eventually, students found themselves seated and speaking before the entire class arranged in a circle. The authors found this to be an effective type of desensitization. Instead of creating an anxiety hierarchy and having students learn deep muscle relaxation as with traditional systematic desensitization, the authors used the group size to slowly desensitize students to the fear of facing an audience. Students often reported how helpful this practice was in easing them in front of the class. This *in vivo* technique proved effective. The authors also required students to find an article on communication apprehension in a journal and report on the article to the entire class. There were two benefits to this assignment: (1) it afforded students a chance to speak from three to five

minutes, and (2) the reports helped teach other students (and the instructors) about some uncovered facet of communication apprehension. The reports were not graded, and other students were encouraged to ask questions. Eventually, students were graduated to the front of the class through a brief (2-3 minutes) ungraded informative speech. They were then required to give an additional, longer (4-6 minutes) informative speech and two persuasive speeches (5-7 minutes) for a grade.

Instructors interested in starting a CA section of the basic course may wish to familiarize themselves with the previously mentioned methods that have been in use over the past twenty-five years to help reduce public speaking CA. Ultimately, each instructor must decide which method is best, but thorough knowledge of each of these methods of reducing communication apprehension is a *sine qua non* for those interested in developing a CA special section of the basic course.

In an extensive review of cognitive restructuring, systematic desensitization, and skills training, Allen, Hunter, and Donohue (1989) concluded that all were effective in reducing public speaking anxiety; skills training alone was the least effective and a combination of all three methods was the most effective. Determining which method to employ might actually rest with common sense: if a student is so nervous that he or she can't get through his or her introduction, systematic desensitization may be most appropriate. If a student has a poor attitude and is convinced that he or she can't make it through a speech, cognitive structuring might be most beneficial. Finally, if the student has no experience whatsoever with public speaking, skills instruction might be the best method. However, the authors' experiences agree with the findings of Allen, Hunter, and Donohue (1989) — a combination of these treatments is best — adapting each method to the needs of the individual student.

PRACTICING WITHOUT A LICENSE

Booth-Butterfield and Cottone (1991) note that some of the methods used to help apprehensive students (i.e., systematic desensitization, cognitive restructuring) are clearly identified with clinical psychology and counseling. To date, there is no ethical code of conduct for treatment of CA, and if those who teach communication are doing therapy without a license, legal problems might emerge. To protect oneself from a suit for practicing therapy without a license, Booth-Butterfield and Cottone (1991) offer these two suggestions: (1) make sure the instruction is done in conjunction with their normal duties (i.e., teaching students to become better speakers) at their place of employment, and (2) never practice these techniques in a private setting where a fee is charged. Finally they offer three questions that anyone attempting to help a student overcome CA might ask:

> (a) how does your *training* in CAA treatment support your treatment actions? (b) in what ways are your services accountable to outside sources? (c) have you taken steps to ensure that your actions do not lead to any *harms* for your students? (p. 178)

However, Allen and Hunt (1993) claim that Booth-Butterfield and Cottone's argument is a moot one since "there appears to be an extremely remote and limited possibility of criminal prosecution for CA professionals" (p. 386). Allen and Hunt also note that there is no evidence of students suffering harm as a result of CA treatment. Though Allen and Hunt make a good case, they miss the key issue in this argument — the ethical implications of offering advice to students without the proper training and background to do so. Instructors who teach the CA class should not become involved in personal or psychological issues of student behavior that are often associ-

ated with CA. The primary issue is not one of avoiding being sued, but one of offering students advice that instructors have not been properly trained to provide.

Closely related to this issue is the reaction that instructors might encounter from their campus' counseling center. In order to avoid any problems, it is best to meet with the director of one's school's counseling center to explain what methods are being employed, and ask what services the counseling center has to offer. If the center can provide systematic desensitization, then it would be best to refer students to counseling, thereby eliminating the problem of "turf battles" with the counseling center.

CONCLUSION

In preparing this article, the authors' intent was not to discourage speech communication professionals from developing programs to help students overcome CA. Instead, the intent was to provide an awareness of some of the obstacles that may be encountered in implementing these programs. In fact, many more programs are needed. In a study done in 1982, Hoffman and Sprague found that of all the institutions registered with the Speech Communication Association, only 6.1 percent had any programs to help students with CA despite the fact that 20 percent of all college students experience CA. More recent research is probably needed to determine if this percentage has changed over the last twelve years.

There are many good references that discuss the research and procedures for instructors wishing to implement programs for students with CA (Ayers & Hopf, 1993; Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield, 1992; Kelly & Watson, 1986; Richmond & McCroskey, 1992; Phillips, 1991). Because CA has been identified as a major characteristic of academically at-risk students (Chesboro, McCroskey, Atwater, Bahrenfuss,

Cawelti, Gaudino, & Hodges, 1992), it might be wise for course directors to consider the implementation of a program for students suffering from CA as part of their basic course.

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An Assessment of Panel vs. Individual Instructor Ratings of Student Speeches

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Each semester numerous students venture into our public speaking courses. Unlike most of the curriculum, these students enter a course in which their final grade will be based, partially, on a subjective evaluation of their performance ability. While instructor training and clearly defined speech presentation objectives are helpful, it is still impossible to eliminate the subjective nature of performance evaluation. Speech grading becomes even more critical when one tries to balance the expectations of several instructors teaching different sections of the same basic course.

This paper will suggest the use of a panel grading system to help combat the possibility of instructor bias and increase the amount of useful feedback provided for the student. Following a review of the most common forms of grading bias this essay will then identify precedents for the use of an instructor panel grading system. Finally, the results of an initial study will be offered along with relevant considerations for the implementation of the panel grading system.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION CONCERNS

Most public speaking instructors employ a criterion referenced measurement when assigning presentation grades.

With criterion-referenced evaluation students will compete against their instructor's perception of what constitutes an A, B, C, D and F speech. Smythe, Kibler, and Hutchings (1973) revealed that criterion-referenced measurement is essential in communication performance courses. In a norm-referenced course, which would compare student performances against each other, a student could give a speech that would meet the criteria for a C speech, yet receive a lower grade because of being in a class of superior speakers. Frisbee (1989) noted that criterion-referenced grading allows the student to focus on course goals and possibly assist a peer without jeopardizing his/her own grade.

However, Rubin (1990) noted that instructors who use criterion-referenced grading must still be concerned with validity and reliability in performance evaluation. Rubin explained that validity refers to "how accurate and comprehensive an evaluation is" (p. 380). For example, validity may refer to whether or not a grading sheet used to evaluate speakers has all the elements on it which the instructor will be looking for. Reliability deals with consistency and dependability. The concern here is whether the instructor grades each speaker with equal rigor and according to the same criteria.

BIAS

Various types of bias can reduce the validity and reliability of a performance assessment (Airasian, 1991; Rubin, 1990; Stiggins, Backlund & Bridgeford, 1985). Rubin identified several forms of bias which result from a lack of objectivity by the instructor including cultural biases, leniency, trait error, central tendency, and halo and horned effects. Leniency error refers to the tendency to be too easy or too hard (negative leniency error) in the evaluation of all performances in a class. Central tendency refers to an instructor's

grouping of grades in a fairly tight cluster. This tendency will frequently bring down the grades of students who give superior performances while increasing the grades of inferior performances.

Halo effect and horned effect occur when an instructor is too easy or hard on a specific speaker, while trait error is the extremely harsh or lax grading on a specific component of the performance assignment (e.g., delivery, research). A study by Bohn and Bohn (1985) argued that leniency and halo effect should be of greater concern to instructors than trait errors and confirmed earlier findings (Bowers, 1964; Guilford, 1954; Gunderson, 1978) that rater training reduced overall and leniency error.

Finally, Rubin (1990) revealed that previous researchers (e.g. Miller, 1964) have warned that individual preferences and prejudices may influence an instructor's evaluation of a performance. Possibly the most likely areas of bias would be the instructor's attitude about the speaker's topic and mental disposition toward the speaker.

Another form of bias, not typically addressed in the literature, is the limited view a student receives from the feedback of only one evaluator. While the instructor may consistently apply his/her criteria for acceptable delivery to each student, how might that instructor's delivery criteria differ from those of another instructor? A student may be informed by one instructor that her delivery is acceptable while another instructor would see a need for improvement.

The limited view from a single instructor goes beyond ratings on a criteria sheet. Instructors typically provide written and/or oral feedback regarding what was done well and how to improve weaknesses in a performance. A variety of informed evaluators would discover more areas for potential improvement and provide more suggestions on how to make the necessary changes.

The use of graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) in public speaking classes adds another variable when attempting to

improve evaluator reliability and validity. Graduate students teach a significant number of public speaking students each year. Gibson, Hanna, and Huddleston (1985) discovered that (GTAs) taught 18% of all basic communication courses.

Most teaching assistants receive some form of training but not solely on performance evaluation, although 97% of all GTAs, across disciplines, have grading responsibilities (Diamond & Gray, 1987; Parrett, 1987). Research on GTA grading practices suggests that these instructors tend to be more lenient than their faculty counterparts. Williamson and Pier (1985) found in a study of 43 basic communication course sections taught by faculty and GTAs (seven faculty members and 17 GTAs) that GTAs assigned more Bs and incompletes while instructors used more Cs and Ds.

PANEL GRADING

Panel grading is suggested here as a means for further enhancing performance evaluation validity and reliability while also increasing the amount of feedback each student receives on his/her presentation. The prospect of panel evaluation is not without precedent. According to Thompson (1944) more accurate speaker ratings might be achieved with a panel of raters.

A stronger precedent is found in intercollegiate forensics competition. Forensics tournament directors and coaches recognize the importance of panel judging. During preliminary rounds of debate or individual events competition tournament directors are limited to providing only one or two judges per round. However, for elimination rounds, panels of three or five judges are assigned to evaluate the speakers.

Forensics coaches and tournament directors have recognized the importance of the decisions being rendered in elimination rounds. Panel judging is used to counter the possibility of one judge making a poor decision based on a particular bias

or inaccurate evaluation of what is taking place in the round. Panel judging has an additional benefit of providing the student with a variety of feedback on his/her performance. The student also can compare judges' comments to determine which critiques are verified by similar statements and which critiques reflect isolated concerns or observations.

Peer evaluations provide another precedent for panel grading. Instructors frequently have students in the audience assign a grade and/or provide written or oral feedback to their peers. Book and Simmons (1980) found that student evaluators provided beneficial comments for their peers. They revealed that the feedback was perceived as helpful by the speakers, consistent with content and delivery criteria, and similar to instructor feedback.

Zeman (1986), however, noted that peer evaluators are particularly susceptible to leniency, halo, and trait errors. Barker (1969) likewise found the probable existence of a halo effect in students' evaluations of speeches. Rubin (1990) added that student ratings are higher than instructor scores, and students who are next to speak are more lenient in their scores and then become more negative after they have delivered their speech. Rubin summarizes the conflicting data regarding peer evaluation by stating, "it is NOT clear that peer evaluations are valid and reliable. The criticism given in class by peers is helpful, but their grades may not be accurate" (p. 382). Thus peer evaluation panels provide a precedent, but not a substitution, for panel grading with instructors.

A PRELIMINARY STUDY

A study of 48 speeches given by students in public speaking classes was conducted to examine the effects of instructor panel grading in comparison with individual instructor grading. The researchers used students from three different public

speaking classes and a total of five graduate teaching assistant instructors (GTAs). Each GTA had one year of teaching experience and had completed university-wide and departmental GTA training. Students from three of the five GTAs' classes were used in this study. The other two GTAs were used in grading panels, but their students were not involved in the study.

Each of the 48 student speeches was videotaped by the instructor. This was a common practice as it was required of all students in the various public speaking courses. Each student delivered an informative speech designed to provide new or useful information for the audience. The use of visual aids was optional. The student's instructor would evaluate the speech and assign a grade. This grade was recorded in the instructor's grade book and stood as the actual grade for the presentation. After grading speeches for one class, the instructor would turn the videotapes over to the designated panel of three other GTAs.

Panel raters and instructors used the same speech evaluation form for rating student speeches. The form consisted of 15 items rated on a 5-point scale, with 1 the lowest rating and 5 the highest. The items reflected criteria for the speech assignment concerning statement of purpose, organization of main points and use of support material, use of language and visual aids, and delivery. The form also included a debit item for exceeding or falling below the assigned time limit, but almost none of the speeches were affected this way; so, the item was excluded from analysis. Both panel raters and instructors used criterion-based evaluation. This was standard policy for all sections of the public speaking course.

RESULTS

Because the items on the speech rating form were summed to derive student scores for grade determination, those scores were the unit of analysis in this study. The number of student speeches involved in this study (n=48) was deemed too small to retain sufficient statistical power with so many possible comparisons. Means for each panelist and instructor for each class are displayed in Table 1. Scores could range from a minimum of 15 to a maximum of 75, with a theoretical midpoint of 45. Assuming the common grade scale of 90% for an A, 80% for a B, and so forth, the means generally indicate scores in the middle to high B range across raters and classes, with the exceptions being Raters B and C in Class 2 whose mean ratings represent grades of C. Inspection of item means for each Rater in each class showed consistent ratings of 4.00 or higher on the 5.00 scale. Thus, leniency may have affected ratings of these speeches across the board.

Table 1
Means (and Standard Deviations) on Rating Scores for Each Rater and Instructor within Class

Class	*n*	Rater A	Rater B	Rater C	Instructor
1	13	64.92	64.15	61.92	66.69
		(4.89)	(4.36)	(6.16)	(5.51)
2	17	62.71	56.47	59.47	65.82
		(4.38)	(8.23)	(7.11)	(5.63)
3	17	63.29	63.29	66.41	66.12
		(7.11)	(6.79)	(5.12)	(5.29)

Note: Classes had different raters and instructors, hence, columnar means represent independent ratings.

Table 2
Alpha Coefficients of Reliability for Rating Scores
For Each Rater and Instructor within Class

Class	Rater A	Rater B	Rater C	Instructor
1	.75	.61	.76	.84
2	.62	.86	.79	.82
3	.86	.82	.80	.76

Was the rating scale reliable? Table 2 presents alpha reliability coefficients computed for each rater within each class. Taken together the coefficients show the scale to have had moderate to moderately high reliability across multiple users and samples. Each coefficient also can be taken as an indication of intra-rater reliability within a class. The greatest similarity in reliabilities across raters was in Class 3 and the least in Class 2. In Class 1 the evaluation instrument achieved greater reliability for the instructor than for any of the panelists, while that of the instructor in Class 3 was somewhat lower than the panelists'. Since the alpha coefficient is a measure of internal consistency of items within a scale, the variation in coefficients suggests that different raters responded somewhat differently to the items. Perhaps raters differed as to the criteria they emphasized in completing the evaluations, suggesting some degree of trait error on the part of these raters.

Was the average score across raters reliable? One way a panel of raters could be used in evaluating student speeches would be to average their ratings with that of the instructor. The need would then arise to establish the reliability of the obtained average score. In the present case, scores assigned by the three panelists and instructor within each class were

treated as a composite, and alpha reliability coefficients thereby computed. For Class 1 the reliability was .86. For Class 2 it was .93. And for Class 3 it was .91. Thus a form of inter-rater reliability was established for each class. In all three classes the resulting coefficients can be considered high.

Were rating scores consistent among panel raters? Analyses reported above revealed that the scale was reliable across users, and that combining panelist and instructor ratings would produce highly reliable average scores. Another issue concerned whether mean ratings on the same speeches by a panel of raters were statistically similar. Assuming each speech was evaluated similarly by the three panelists, it would follow that the raters' means on those evaluations would not differ significantly. Pairwise t-tests were computed to compare the means of panelists within each class. Results are reported in Table 3. In six out of nine comparisons,

Table 3
Tests for Pair-wise Differences in Rating Scores Among Raters within Each Class

Class	Raters A-B	Raters A-C	Raters B-C
1	.77	3.00	2.23*
	(1.43)	(1.51)	(0.99)
2	6.23**	3.24*	–3.00**
	(6.35)	(1.23)	(0.71)
3	0.00	–3.12*	–3.12**
	(1.58)	(1.38)	(0.82)

Note. Parenthetical values are standard error of the difference between the pair of means.
**p<.01
*p< .05

pairs of panelists differed significantly in their mean ratings of the same students' speeches. Most striking is that in Class 2 all comparisons were significantly different. These findings indicate that even experienced panelists can be inconsistent in their evaluations of student speeches, and call into question the reliability results reported above. Still, it is interesting to note that Raters A and B in both Classes 1 and 3 were negligibly different in their respective average evaluations.

Were individual panelists' mean ratings consistent with the instructor's ratings? Results of this analysis are reported in Table 4. For this analysis, t-tests were computed to compare each panelist's mean ratings in each class with the mean ratings made by the instructor of that class. Out of nine comparisons, four were nonsignificant, showing consistency between those panelists and instructors. Two of these occurred

Table 4
Tests for Pair-Wise Differences in Rating Scores between Each Rater and Respective Instructor within Class

Class	Instructor — Rater A	Instructor — Rater B	Instructor — Rater C
1	1.77	2.53	4.77**
	(1.16)	(1.51)	(0.99)
2	3.12**	9.35**	6.35**
	(0.78)	(1.23)	(1.29)
3	2.82	2.82*	−.29
	(1.20)	(1.01)	(0.88)

Note: Parenthetical values are standard error of the difference between the pair of means.
**p< .01
*p< .05

in Class 1 and two in Class 3. For Class 2, none of the panelists was similar to the instructor in evaluating student speeches. In each of these cases, the instructor's mean rating was significantly higher than those of the panelists. The same is true for the other two significant differences. In fact, in only one comparison did the instructor have a mean rating lower than a panelist.

DISCUSSION

While specific conclusions might be difficult to derive from this study, some tendencies were apparent. The rating form used in this study was found to have adequate reliability across classes and raters, but the panelists differed in their ratings of students in the same class. Panel members apparently varied in how they applied the criteria indicating that trait error was prevalent. Although there was a strong tendency to rate students at the top end of the rating scale, there was discrepancy among individual items. This would help explain the differences in overall mean ratings among panelists.

This study found that while some panelists were similar to instructors in evaluating the same speeches, others were significantly different. This finding could be interpreted in different ways. One interpretation suggests that the use of panel evaluators has promise and could be an effective grading practice. A second insight would hint that steps need to be taken to help insure the strongest validity and reliability possible with instructor and/or panel ratings. The third interpretation could offer that panel grading allows evaluators to make distinctions between superior and inferior performances which regular instructors do not make when assigning grades. While there seemed to be relative agreement in the performances which received the highest grades, much of the discrepancy between instructor and panel grades tended to occur

with performances that received lower grades. In general, the panel would tend to grade weaker performances more harshly than the individual instructor. It could be possible that the panel graders are less susceptible to leniency error and therefore give more accurate grades to inferior performances.

Two other important needs seem to be emphasized by the results of this study. First, it is important to use systematic and thorough training of all raters. This will help to alleviate leniency and trait error. A second need falls into the decision making realm of the course director. While it appears that there may be some merit to the use of panel evaluators, the course director will need to determine how much emphasis to place on the instructors' grade and how much to place on the panel's evaluation.

Suggestions for Implementing a Panel Grading System. While evaluating the possible merits of panel grading, basic course directors also will need to determine whether such a system could be implemented in their department. Although circumstances and available resources will vary between institutions, we can offer a few frameworks which might be tailored according to specific needs.

The first means of implementing panel grading involves selecting four GTAs/instructors who would have only performance grading responsibilities, they would not teach sections of the basic course. This framework might be appropriate for departments which offer 15 or fewer sections per semester.

The selected instructors could be paired together with each duo assigned to assist in the grading of speeches from half of the sections. With this framework, each regular instructor would grade their students' performance and then the two elected instructors would also grade either the live or videotaped performance. All students would receive feedback from three evaluators and a panel grade could be determined.

Assuming that there were 15 sections of the basic course being taught, with an average of 25 students per section, one pair of selected instructors would evaluate 175 speeches

(seven sections) and the other pair would evaluate 200 speeches (eight sections) per round of assigned speeches. With ten sections, each selected instructor would grade 125 speeches. While this is a heavy grading burden, it is balanced by the fact that the selected instructors would not have traditional instructional responsibilities and would have no duties when speeches were not being presented. The selection of panel instructors can be based on seniority or other qualities which would indicate that those individuals are among the most competent evaluators available.

While this is probably the easiest means for implementing panel grading, it has some limitations which might make it impractical for many basic course directors. Selecting four GTAs/instructors to have positions which do not involve covering classes will not be economically feasible for many departments. Arguments can be made for the improved evaluation and development of students which could result from panel grading, but these claims will probably not be enough to persuade most administrators who have budget constraints.

The perceived value of the panel instructors might also emerge as a problem. Ideally, these positions would carry a degree of esteem and be sought after by instructors or GTAs. However, if the grading is perceived as being too burdensome, these positions may not be wanted by the most qualified individuals. Furthermore, GTAs may prefer the experience of classroom instruction as opposed to only evaluating speeches.

Finally, this format could probably not be used by course directors who have more than 15 sections per semester. With additional sections the panel evaluators would become overburdened with the number of speeches to evaluate and the quality of those evaluations would likely falter. Course directors would probably not be able to assign additional instructors to panel positions. These limitations will likely prevent many course directors from being able to use this panel grading format. However, if these limitations can be avoided, this

format would be the easiest means for implementing panel grading.

A second way basic course directors can implement a panel grading format is by assigning groups of three instructors to work together. With this format, instructors would grade their own students' speeches and the other two instructors in the trio would also be responsible for evaluating those performances. Therefore, each instructor would evaluate their own 25 students and 50 additional students.

By assigning instructors to groups of three, the process of getting all speeches graded would be easier because each instructor would know which classes they are responsible for. The trio can also coordinate schedules to make the process more efficient. Along those lines, course directors could assign different class meeting times to each of the members of the trio. For example, a trio of classes could be scheduled for Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:00 to 8:50, 9:00 to 9:50 and 10:00 to 10:50. This would allow for the possibility of panel members sitting in on the other classes to which they are responsible.

This format would allow the possibility of implementing panel grading without employing instructors/GTAs who do not cover the regular instructional responsibilities of the basic course. It also allows for the possibility of panel instructors either sitting in on the classes they are responsible for or grading the speeches from videotape at their leisure. Furthermore, this format is not limited by the number of sections available. It could work equally well with 15 or 50 sections of the basic course.

The limitation to this format is that the number of speeches instructors/GTAs are required to grade is tripled. Some consideration might need to be made for the extra time required to fulfill their grading responsibilities. For GTAs, it might be possible that their service responsibilities could be reduced to compensate for their grading responsibilities. Departments which require a larger number of speech

assignments (four or more) may choose to reduce the number of performance assignments in favor of the greater feedback per speech.

The preceding formats offer two quite different means for implementing panel grading into the basic course curriculum. Hopefully, interested basic course directors could implement one of these or a variation of either format. However, if full implementation of a panel grading system is not feasible, course directors could consider using the second format for only one or two of the assigned speeches. This would limit the grading burden on instructors yet provide some of the benefits of panel grading.

A final alternative would limit the use of panel grading to honors sections of the public speaking course. Honors students typically seek stronger academic challenges and more thorough feedback on their work. Panel grading would provide these students with the critique and feedback they desire. If full implementation of panel grading is not feasible in all sections of the public speaking course, this might be a viable alternative as the logistical concern of developing GTA/instructor grading panels for one (or two) honors sections would be minimal.

CONCLUSION

This study suggests at least a few issues which must be taken into consideration before implementing a panel grading system. First, leniency error presents a problem for GTAs. This is consistent with the findings of Williamson and Pier (1985). However, panel members were less susceptible to leniency error than the real instructor of students who delivered inferior speeches. Second, trait errors are a common problem in performance evaluation and they are not necessarily eliminated by the use of panel evaluations. Third, there is a dichotomy between the use of instructor and panel eval-

uations. One can assume that the instructor should be a more reliable evaluator because he/she knows the student better. However, this relationship may cause the prevalence of leniency error. Fourth, the availability of multiple written feedback (from panelists) gives the student more information on how to improve weaknesses, but there is the possibility that this information could become contradictory. Finally, the course director would need to consider the logistical complications of developing panels of evaluators. Future studies might benefit by overcoming two limitations of the present study. First, a larger sample size would allow for more detailed analysis. Finally, future studies might attempt to have panelists evaluate live performances instead of videotaped speeches.

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The Incorporation of Mentors and Assistant Basic Course Directors (ABCDs) into the Basic Course Program: Creating a Safety Net For New Teaching Assistants*

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Graduate school can be an exhilarating and challenging experience but it also can provide frustrations and create anxiety. New teaching assistants (TAs) must manage conflicting roles of student, instructor, colleague, and competitor (just to name the most obvious), a task which may produce considerable stress. The degree to which a graduate program helps TAs to meet their needs and cope with this stress may affect TA success, both as teachers and students. Thus, TA socialization and support are important issues to be addressed by departments which employ TAs.

Research into the needs of new teachers can, by extension, be applied to TAs. For instance, Odell, Loughlin, and Ferraro (1986-1987) investigated what questions new teachers asked their support teachers during the first year of service. Support teachers reported a total of 1143 questions. The questions fell into seven categories: instructional (teaching strategies, content questions), system (procedural questions), resource

* Portions of this article were presented at different meetings of the Speech Communication Association.

(gathering, distribution, or locating resources), emotional (support), managerial (time management), parental (working with parents), and disciplinary (managing students). With the possible exception of the parental category, TAs handle similar teaching issues and have similar types of questions. Thus, all seven areas should be of concern to those who attempt to train and/or socialize TAs.

Staton and Darling (1989) identified two socialization processes that TAs experience. Role socialization involves TAs learning to function in their new roles as graduate students and teachers. As graduate students, TAs face increased challenges compared to those faced as undergraduates. In addition, teaching is a novel experience that TAs must rapidly learn. Cultural socialization involves learning the norms that are particular to TAs' universities and departments. Staton and Darling (1989) also identified four functions served during these socialization processes: (a) development of a social support system, (b) information collection, (c) adjustment to rules and practices, and (d) the generation of new ideas. According to these authors, much must be accomplished in a very short amount of time if a TA is to survive the pressures of graduate school.

How TAs handle the demands of graduate school and teaching often can determine whether or not they earn a graduate degree. Providing a safety net for TAs is an essential component of any TA development program that achieves high levels of retention, productivity, satisfaction and esprit de corps. Since many basic courses rely on TAs for a majority of their staffing needs, strategies for improving the TA experience have direct relevance to those basic courses.

Support programs may take a number of forms. It may be that departmental maintenance of academic materials such as journals, yearbooks, handbooks, computerized data bases, and other publications/references can relieve stress for TAs, especially if the library facilities are inadequate. Another form of support may take the form of a faculty advising pro-

gram. Faculty may assume responsibility for one or two TAs whom they mentor throughout the first year until the TAs select their own advisors and committee members. A third, somewhat related, tactic would be to create a mentoring system incorporating peer mentors: other TAs who have made it through at least the first year of the graduate program. These mentors serve as resource persons and sources of support for their junior colleagues. This form of support provides a safety net for the new TAs by allowing them the luxury of consulting with experienced peers who are not in direct competition with them (the mentors would already have completed the courses the TAs are taking, thus minimizing the competition for grades and academic recognition).

The use of peers as mentors provides at least three advantages. First, as peers, the mentors can relate easily to the pressures the mentees are experiencing. Monsour and Corman (1991), in their discussion of doctoral graduate students, suggested that social support is most effective when received from peers. Second, Clemson (1987) argued that trust will be highest in mentor relationships:

> The protégé must feel free to confide in the mentor, and the protégé must feel free to make mistakes in front of the mentor without fear of institutional repercussions. Department chairs, supervisors, specialists, and administrators, therefore, are not suitable candidates as mentors for student teachers, interns or beginning teachers" (p. 88).

Third, peer mentors, in combination with other departmental support, create a support-team system similar to those developed for new teachers in public school systems (Hawk, 1986-1987). Peer mentors, therefore, seem well suited to assist new TAs as they socialize both in their roles and in their specific graduate cultures.

Staton and Darling (1989) specifically recommended the use of experienced TAs to aid in the socialization process of new TAs:

> Our research suggests that such ideas as encouraging senior TAs to provide social events for new TAs, explicitly teaching new TAs how to ask questions to gain information, and providing information opportunities for them to brainstorm with one another about teaching and research could become important aspects of TA training programs (p. 21).

Naturally, one-year Master's programs would rarely be able to adopt such a mentor model. However, programs that employ TAs for more than one year have the advantage of "carry-over" of staff. These experienced TAs can serve in at least two support capacities: TA mentors and assistant basic course directors (ABCDs). The ways in which those two roles have been filled over the past several years at Central Michigan University form the basis for this article. In particular, we will describe two possible safety nets for new TAs: peer mentors and ABCDs. The following sections trace the evolution of the two peer mentoring programs currently in place, explain the strengths and weaknesses of those programs, and provide criteria for selecting personnel.

THE TA MENTORING PROGRAM

Prior to the fall 1992 semester, the mentor program consisted of a loosely organized plan which left the mentors with little direction or guidance in how to best provide assistance to new TAs. Mentors were assigned by the basic course director (BDC) as part of their TA experience. Consequently, a number of problems emerged. First, not all TAs were equally qualified to pass along helpful information, because not all TAs succeeded in the program at the same level of accomplishment. Nor were all TAs good role models for teaching expectations and information. Some were not effective as teachers and, consequently, were unable to pass along information about how to teach. Others resisted some of the rules

and regulations associated with teaching the basic course and passed those negative attitudes along to their mentees. Still others were too stressed out from their own graduate responsibilities to take on the role of mentor for a new TA. As an overall consequence, it became clear that a more focused, deliberate mentoring program was needed if peer mentoring was to have any real impact on the basic course staff.

As such, during the spring 1992 semester, one of the assistant basic course directors polled the TA staff regarding their experiences as mentees. The survey, which was completed by 14 of the 17 new TAs that semester, provided a number of insights into the strengths and weaknesses of that approach to mentoring. In particular, the results of the survey indicated that, while there was much that was happening, much could be improved. For one thing, the mentors were taking no responsibility for initiating contact with their charges, although most of them were quite willing to provide assistance when asked. It was equally apparent that the new TAs had done very little asking. Most of the conversations between mentor and mentee tended to take the following form: "So, how's it going?" "Not bad. How are things with you?" "Fine." Thus, although pleasantries were exchanged, very little substantive information was transmitted in either direction. As would be expected, satisfaction with the mentor relationships tended to vary. Six of the TAs indicated that their mentors had been helpful overall and that their mentors were concerned with their progress. The same number felt that their mentors had expressed no concern and, as a consequence, had been not at all helpful. Whereas some mentors were described as "encouraging," "open-minded," "receptive," and "sincere," an almost equal number were described as "rude, not sociable," having a "negative attitude toward students," and "not sincere with responses." When asked to describe what they would do differently should they become TA mentors during the following year, the participants said that they would "be a better communicator," "have a

scheduled meeting," "initiate the conversation more," and "try to understand each other better." The ABCD's suggestions were as follows: "First, have an instructional session, perhaps more than one, teaching the mentors how to execute their role, what it looks like and why their interactions are so important. Second, rather than making mentoring mandatory, ask for volunteers. TAs who have poor attitudes toward teaching or graduate school might be more harmful. Also, if one has no interest, he or she probably will not take the initiative to interact as has been expressed by some TAs on the survey."

Following interpretation of the survey results, the ABCD who had collected the data met with the entire group of TAs during one of the spring (1992) staff meetings. At that time she led an open discussion which focused on the problems which befell the TAs during their first experiences with graduate school and teaching, noted how a mentor program would have resolved many of those problems, and then asked for volunteers who would be interested in becoming a mentor for one of the nine new TAs hired for the fall (1992) semester.

Based on the survey results and responses to the discussion held during the staff meeting, the basic course director asked one of the returning TAs to take charge of the mentoring program for the fall (1992) and spring (1993) semesters. The rationale for selecting a returning TA for this position, rather than assigning the role to one of the ABCDs, was that the mentor program coordinator position provided yet one more rung on the hierarchical ladder for new TAs to approach for information, guidance and support. The position created one more safety net. In addition, the many responsibilities attached to this position seemed to suggest that the role would overburden the course assistants, who already had extensive job descriptions. Although there was no reassigned time or extra money attached to the position, it was believed that the experience would be attractive to a TA who was hop-

ing eventually to seek employment in an area that would utilize this sort of experience.

Criteria for selecting a mentor program coordinator (MPC) continue to evolve. Basic considerations suggest that the MPC should be someone who (a) is a supporter of the basic course program, (b) works well with the basic course director, (c) has high credibility and is well respected by the TA staff, (d) is capable of motivating others, (e) is supportive of others, (f) would benefit personally from coordinating the program, (g) would be willing to put in the time needed to develop and supervise the program, (i) is sensitive to the interpersonal dynamics in the current staff (who is not talking with whom, who once dated whom, etc.) and (j) is looking for experiences beyond the typical teaching and research experiences of graduate school. Once the MPC was selected, the course director charged her with researching and subsequently developing a workable mentor program. Further, the BCD provided her with a list of teaching assistants who had volunteered to be mentors during the upcoming year.

The first thing the new MPC did was collect articles on mentoring in an attempt to identify the advantages to mentors and those being mentored. The expectation was that presentation of this list to both groups would add to their motivation for participation. In particular, the MPC identified the following as possible advantages to the new TAs from an article by Edlind and Haensley (1985):

a. career and interest advancement;
b. increase in knowledge and skills;
c. development of talent;
d. enhancement of self-esteem and self-confidence;
e. development of a personal ethic or set of standards;
f. establishment of a long-term friendship; and
g. enhancement of creativity (p. 56).

In addition, the following were identified in the same article (Edlind & Haensley, 1985) as possible advantages to the mentors:

a. completion of work;

b. stimulation of ideas;

c. establishment of a long-term friendship; and

d. personal satisfaction (p. 58).

According to these lists, advantages for the new TAs involve help in meeting the right people; improvement in a variety of interpersonal, academic, teaching, and thinking skills; development of personal qualities such as leadership potential; enhancement of self-esteem and confidence; and access to a role model to assist them in learning the implicit norms of the organization and accepting feedback from evaluators in the program. In short, all four functions cited by Staton and Darling (1989) appear to be satisfied for TAs. Mentoring can aid in role socialization by providing access to information about course work and teaching. Mentors also can help new TAs adapt to the specific culture in which they will work. Advantages to the mentors center around the synergy that may evolve from working with others, which translates into added creativity, motivation for the work, and development of new points of view. Additionally, mentors establish friendships and receive the personal satisfaction that comes from helping others, which may have a positive influence on their self-actualization.

Drawing from other research on the benefits of mentors, several additional advantages to the new TAs could be added to the list. For instance, Thies-Sprinthall (1986) and Huffman and Leak (1986) found that mentors helped mentees with both personal and task concerns. In terms of role socialization, mentees reported help in task areas concerning classroom management, organization, and understanding of the induction process. Personally, mentors provided support and

encouragement (Huffman & Leak, 1986). Certainly one of the main tasks of the first weeks in a graduate program is to find one's place in the organizational system, the cultural socialization process. Effective mentors can direct new TAs to the appropriate sources of information, can advise them about communication strategies that will work for some faculty and not for others, can provide insight into the unspoken rules of the organization, and can provide guidelines by which new TAs can assess their success at becoming a functioning component of the overall system.

Several additional advantages for experienced TAs also seem apparent. Working closely with a junior TA could build self-esteem for the mentor, increasing his or her overall confidence (and success) as a teacher and as a graduate student. Plus, when a person explains an idea or concept to someone else, that information becomes clearer to the presenter. Thus, helping a new TA handle stress, negotiate the ins and outs of meeting faculty and creating a committee, write effective lesson plans, deal with students, and balance the many dialectical tensions associated with graduate school enhances those skills for the experienced TA (Thies-Sprinthall, 1986). Sometimes just talking through a problem with someone else presents new solutions that otherwise would not be discovered. Similarly, such problem-solving could lead the experienced TA to be less certain about what he or she heretofore believed to be the "right" way to do things. Teaching others can be a learning experience. (For additional reading on the value of mentors, see Blackburn, Chapman, & Cameron, 1981; Clemson, 1987; Ganser, 1991; Gehrke, 1988; Gehrke & Kay, 1984; Moore, 1982; Noller & Frey, 1983; Parkay, 1988; and Torrance, 1984).

At the first mentor meeting held in late summer, the mentor program coordinator provided a list of the incoming TAs to the prospective mentor staff and asked if there were any individual preferences or problems she should take into consideration when assigning mentor pairs. Since many of the

TAs graduated from the same undergraduate program, previous romantic relationships which had soured precluded some mentors from working effectively with certain TAs. Based on this information, the MPC paired the mentors with mentees such that no discernible problems were identified.

The fall (1992) semester had nine new TAs coming on board, 12 TAs returning for one semester, and three TAs (excluding the ABCDs) returning for a full school year. Of the 12 one-semester TAs, six had volunteered to be mentors. The three TAs returning for the full year also volunteered. Because six of the mentors would be leaving the program in December, the BCD and MPC decided to develop a team approach to assigning mentors. It was decided that each new TA would be assigned an individual mentor; some of those mentors would be in the program for the entire year and others would be leaving after the first semester. Groups of three mentors and three new TAs were created by combining dyads such that each six-person group was comprised of one TA who would be a mentor for a year, two who would be leaving in December and three new TAs. As such, each of the new TAs would receive one-on-one attention from one mentor for the first semester, the most critical transition period for new TAs. The following semester would involve one mentor providing for three new TAs, ensuring that in January 1993 some TAs wouldn't go mentorless.

Experienced TAs who volunteered to be mentors were contacted by mail over the summer and asked to attend a short workshop on campus prior to meeting the new TAs at an off-campus team-building session to be held for the entire basic course teaching staff. During the mentor workshop, the MPC led an open discussion which provided the new mentors with the opportunity to share their opinions of and experiences with the mentor program. Three guiding principles evolved during that discussion. First, the new mentors agreed that the voluntary nature of the program would ensure that those who did participate as mentors would in theory be more

apt to actually make themselves available when needed by their mentees than those who were forced to participate as mentors. This first assertion was based on the fact that some of the TAs hadn't received any guidance or moral support from their mentors. Second, the mentors felt that the "horror stories" of graduate school should not be shared with the new TAs until they had sufficient time to adjust to the environment. The prevailing consensus was that such information would only serve to intimidate, rather than integrate, the new staff. Third, the mentors voiced a preference for open rather than forced get-togethers or assigned meeting times, based on the rationale that a forced get together suggests artificiality and forced friendship. The importance of a voluntary and spontaneous relationship between mentor and mentee is reinforced by the literature (see, for example, Clemson, 1987). As a result, after the first meeting with their mentees (which occurred at a lake in an informal, social setting) no further mentor-mentee events were scheduled.

Some mentor-mentee pairs were a better match than others. According to informal reports made to the course director during the fall semester, some dyads met frequently in their offices to share ideas, problem-solve and do whatever was needed to help the new TA acclimate. Other dyads encountered personality conflicts early on and, as a result, tended to spend less time together. In those cases, the mentee generally sought out the services of one of the assistant course directors. New TAs also formed support networks among themselves, with those who had received valuable information from their mentors passing that information along to new TAs who had not established the same level of relationship with their mentors. Some of the dyads developed solid friendships. At least one mentor dyad resulted in a romantic relationship later in the year. (While romantic relationships are not specifically frowned upon, they can cause problems if they deteriorate.)

When asked for her general impressions of the mentor program, the MPC provided the following comments:

a. She recommended more follow-up if possible to ensure that mentors and mentees were benefiting from the arrangement.

b. She wondered about the choice of MPC for the next year and suggested selecting an experienced TA who is respected, academically and socially liked, and one who is on campus enough to be familiar with the daily interactions of the TAs.

c. She agreed that the course assistants should not be in charge of the mentor program, because the MPC provides yet another rung on the hierarchical ladder for the TAs to rely on when dealing with the academic organizational structure.

d. She provided the following definition of a good mentor: one who is "caring, empathetic, comfortable with many roles — teaching and student workload — who can keep up and yet be willing to devote the time to others, who is interested in helping, and who is not cynical about being here during the third semester...(knowing they will soon be without jobs, office space, or classes to teach)."

In sum, her feeling was that any attempt to make the TAs' tasks of completing their graduate studies and teaching the basic course more effective and personally rewarding is well worth the effort. Further, the outlay of time far outweighs the outlay of funds. Finally, anything that takes stress off is worthwhile, because graduate school is one stress-filled experience.

The MPC's perceptions were shared by others in the program. At year's end, mentoring experiences were shared both informally in conversation with the course director and formally in a staff meeting. The feedback provided helped us

develop the mentor selection considerations presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Questions to Consider when Selecting TA Mentors

1. Have these TAs done well as teachers? As graduate students? Have they managed the stresses of being both a graduate student and a teacher successfully? Are they aware of the skills/habits/routines they possess that have allowed them to succeed? Could they nurture those abilities in the new TAs?
2. Do these TAs have extra time to devote to helping a new graduate student? Will this additional responsibility jeopardize their ability to complete their own graduate programs?
3. Do these TAs' philosophies of teaching fit with your expectations as the supervisor? If not, can you accept the differences?
4. Do these TAs enjoy what they are doing? Do they value the graduate program? Their experiences so far? Will they enthusiastically endorse the program to the new TAs or will they present a cynical and/or pessimistic picture of the department? Do these TAs hold grudges against you or any other faculty member in the department? If so, can they be objective in their description of the program and faculty?
5. Do these individuals have the time and energy to devote to new TAs? Are they motivated to help others? Are they willing to share their expertise? If needed, will they take the initiative to locate information or handle other requests for their mentees? Would they be willing to attend training sessions or participate in other activities designed to improve their ability as mentors?
6. Do these individuals have effective interpersonal skills? Can they empathize well with others? Do they have a real desire to help others? Are they mature enough to provide support for others?

7. Will these TAs be role models that you can endorse? Do they agree with you about the expectations that you have for TAs in your department — or will they undermine your efforts in one or more areas (e.g., dress code, office hours, class preparation, relationships with students, etc.)?
8. Have these TAs taken advantage of a wide range of opportunities offered in the department and/or institution (e.g., served on student committees, conducted original research with faculty, team-taught other courses with faculty, assumed consulting responsibilities, etc.)?
9. Do these individuals understand the "politics" of the department and the institution? Will they know where to send new TAs for information and/or assistance with problems? Do they understand how to get the information they need and will they take the initiative to do so?
10. Do these TAs see the value of being a mentor? Do they see personal outcomes that will accrue from accepting this role?
11. Will these TAs make the new TAs feel valued and welcome? Will they take the initiative to check on their mentee's progress — beyond the obvious "How's it going?"
12. Do these TAs welcome an opportunity to work with people from other backgrounds? Do they have prejudices that would interfere with their ability to be effective in this role?
13. Do they WANT to be mentors? Do their reasons include benefits for both themselves and for the people they will mentor?

ABCDS AS PART OF THE OVERALL SAFETY NET

The second support group in place at CMU consists of experienced TAs who are selected to assist the BCD. These individuals are selected based on answers posed in Table 2.

The role of the assistant basic course director has been very loosely defined in the past, although there are several specific administrative tasks assigned to the role: to (a) coordinate the videotaping of all SDA 101 students; (b) coordinate the comparison of speech outlines to identify plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty; (c) assist the BCD in teaching SDA 795, the TA training course; and (d) serve as a support person for both the course director and the TAs teaching in the program. The last task is the one that has been the most ambiguous. The BCD must balance the need to maintain a professional distance between herself and her staff with the need to provide close, personal leadership for them. To do so, the role of the ABCD was created. These individuals serve as the "first line" of feedback when all is not going well. For example, if a TA cancels class for capricious reasons, the ABCD can offer friendly advice to that individual about why that behavior is not acceptable for the basic course program. The BCD need not get involved in this process. Should the TA choose to disregard that advice, the course director retains the ability to step in and stop the behavior. Should the cancellation of class be based on a lack of information, an impression that there were no rules precluding such behavior, or an honest assumption that an alternative assignment would compensate for the cancellation (but one which had not been made known to the BCD), informal feedback from the ABCD could serve as a nonthreatening indication that a rule had been broken. As a result, the TA could correct the behavior and would be saved some embarrassment in the process. Similarly, assistants can issue gentle warnings to TAs who, for whatever reason, choose to disregard expectations associated with the basic course. By reminding TAs that such behavior is unacceptable, the ABCDs may change the TAs' behaviors before the course director becomes involved. ABCDs also can motivate the TAs. If the ABCDs model positive teaching behaviors and positive attitudes toward the program,

Table 2
Questions to Consider when Selecting Assistant Basic Course Directors

1. Have these TAs done well as teachers? As graduate students? Are they making significant progress toward completing their own graduate programs? Do they set high standards for themselves and others? Are they aware of the skills/habits/routines they possess that have allowed them to succeed? Could they nurture those abilities in the new TAs?
2. Do these TAs' philosophies of teaching fit with your expectations as the supervisor? If not, can you accept the differences? Do they present teaching as a set of choices and trade-offs, or do they tend to believe they know the "right" way of doing things? Are they interested in (and have they read) the research on communication in the classroom?
3. Do these individuals have the time and energy to devote to new TAs? Will they be accessible to new TAs a large portion of the week or will they expect to hold office hours and leave? Will the additional time it takes to handle these responsibilities jeopardize their own success as graduate students?
4. Are they motivated to help others? Are they willing to share their expertise or would they prefer to remain the "stars" of your department?
5. Do these individuals have considerable interpersonal communication ability? Can they give constructive feedback? Can they be assertive, when needed? Can they empathize well with others, even those who may be less mature, less motivated, less academically skilled? Can they resist gossip and, instead, look for the facts? Can they interact with you openly and honestly?
6. Can they view problems and events from a variety of perspectives? Do they demonstrate an appreciation for the opinions of others? Do they try to take a problem solving approach to differences or do they try to "win" arguments?

7. Are these TAs tolerant of people from diverse backgrounds? Do they have prejudices that would interfere with their ability to handle this role? Are they sensitive to language and/or examples that might offend or exclude specific groups of students? Do they work well with people from different age groups, cultural groups, ethnic backgrounds, religions, etc.?
8. Will these TAs be role models that you can endorse? Do they agree with you about the expectations that you have for TAs in your department — or will they undermine your efforts in one or more areas (e.g., dress code, office hours, class preparation, relationships with students, etc.)?
9. Do these TAs demonstrate leadership ability? Does their style of directing and/or leadership fit with (and/or complement) your own style? Are these individuals likely to empower others — or merely remain directors in the group? Can they share responsibilities? Delegate authority to others?
10. Have these TAs evolved either as opinion leaders or social support people in their own class of graduate students? Are these people that other TAs look up to? Are their opinions valued by others?
11. Do these individuals accept constructive feedback well — especially from you? Do they value your opinion? Do they demonstrate an obvious desire to learn and improve as students and teachers? Would they be willing to attend workshops, seminars or other training sessions to improve their skills as assistant basic course directors?
12. Have these TAs taken advantage of a wide range of opportunities offered in the department and/or institution (e.g., served on student committees, conducted original research with faculty, team-taught other courses with faculty, presented at conferences, assumed consulting responsibilities, etc.)? Do they see the value of this new responsibility?
13. Do these individuals understand the "politics" of the department and the institution? Will they know where to send new TAs for information and/or assistance with problems? Do they understand how to get the information they need and

will they take the initiative to do so? Are they comfortable interacting with faculty and others in positions of authority?

14. Do these individuals work well with you? Do they work well with each other? Will their strengths and weaknesses balance each other? Do they add skills to the mix that compensate for your weaknesses and/or allow you to devote time and energy to other tasks?
15. Can these people work independently, with minimal supervision from you? Will they be comfortable doing so? Can they stay on a schedule? Meet deadlines without constant reminders?
16. Have these people developed relationships with other faculty? With others in the department? In the institution?
17. Are these TAs "sold" on the program? Can they be enthusiastic advocates of the course and its policies? Do they love what they're teaching?
18. Can these individuals handle confidences? Are they mature enough to hear (and keep confidential) information that would not generally be made public? Can they handle switching from student to assistant basic course director without stress? Will they be able to maintain a professional distance between themselves and other TAs, when needed?
19. Are these people trustworthy? Responsible? Can they be entrusted with large sums of money, equipment, building keys, etc.?
20. Do these TAs understand departmental and institutional policies and procedures (registration procedures, policies regulating grievances, etc.).
21. Do they have a positive attitude toward students? Do they understand the make-up of the student population at your institution?
22. Do they WANT the job? Why? Do their reasons for wanting the job include positive outcomes for everyone: the TAs themselves, the rest of the teaching staff, the students, and you? Or do they want the job because of the implied power and prestige associated with it?

other TAs may incorporate those attitudes into their own personal realities about teaching the basic course. Finally, assistants can assure new TAs that the BCD is, indeed, approachable and interested in the welfare of the teaching staff.

Specifically, the ABCD role involves being mentors to the graduate students teaching the basic course. ABCDs are not assigned a specific mentee; they are requested to serve as mentors to all of them. Thus, the assistants attempt to provide help for both academic and personal issues, serving as resource persons and confidantes when the need arises. They answer questions and provide whatever assistance they can with regard to both graduate school classes and teaching. They try to define the position such that the TAs can place their trust in them and know that confidential information will not be passed along. Of course, the ABCDs also make it clear that there will be times when the BCD must be involved in decision-making and let it be known in advance what sorts of information cannot be kept from her indefinitely. When information that is difficult to disclose must be shared with the course director, the ABCDs try to provide strategies for doing so. As a former ABCD described his role, we "support them, direct them, and, if they need it, we're there to hold their hands."

Most importantly, the ABCDs and BCD must function as a team. The assistants provide alternative viewpoints and the course director is there to remind these two TAs that all situations can be seen from a variety of perspectives and that every decision is a trade-off. A former ABCD described the relationship among the two ABCDs and the BCD as "a marriage with three people." Within a three-way marriage, one benefit is that, when one is up and one is down, the participants can help each other get back up. However, there is a certain amount of frustration in a 3-way marriage; at some point in time, one person can be out of touch temporarily and jealousies or frustrations may result. A second metaphor would be that the assistants and the course director function

as a team: when something needs to be accomplished, they problem-solve how to reach that goal; when one of them is in need of support, the other two provide it; when one of them deserves recognition, the other two are quick to recognize the accomplishment; when one of them simply cannot meet an obligation, the other two fill the gap.

Overall, past experiences at this institution suggest that the inclusion of ABCDs and mentors in the basic course program adds to the overall effectiveness of the basic course. Considerations that must be taken into account by the BCD and/or the department prior to incorporating these individuals into a basic course system include the following:

a. Clarify the role of the ABCD (establish the parameters, broad though they may be; establish evaluation criteria; provide information about expectations, time frame for completing tasks, sources of information and assistance, and the specific tasks and amount of authority associated with the position).

b. Create a recognition program for the mentors. Departmental funds are not likely to be available to compensate mentors, and previous research suggests that intangible rewards are most often sought by mentors. "Time spent with protégés, opportunities to be recognized and commended for their assistance, certificates of appreciation and other forms of honoring mentors' contributions are creative alternatives to 'merit pay'" (Clemson, 1987, p. 87).

c. Extend the mentor role to include more task-oriented group projects that focus on both teaching and academic pursuits (The role of the mentor could extend beyond social or emotional support person to academic support person. For instance, groups of mentors could develop research projects with incoming TAs who profess interest in a particular area).

d. Consider what method will be used for discouraging prospective mentor volunteers not perceived as beneficial to the program. Possible strategies for limiting participation from these TAs include thanking the prospective mentors for their interest but recommending that, because of circumstances (such as time constraints, locale, prior commitments, etc.), alternative methods of involvement might be better. Direct rejection of a volunteer may be harmful and should be used only in those cases when a TA's negative attitude or noncompliant behavior is known to all staff members.

Mentors could be assigned to mentees according to research interests (which would involve contacting the incoming TAs during the summer to see if they have a preferred area of interest and, if not, assigning them to a project with a more general focus). Such an opportunity could provide practical experience through which incoming TAs could compare and evaluate their skills to identify strengths and weaknesses. Working with experienced graduate students in a mentor relationship could reassure new TAs that their skills are adequate for the tasks ahead.

Of course, attention to the relationship among the course director, the assistants and the mentors is essential. When the ABCDs and mentors have a solid working relationship with the BCD and can relax when in the course director's presence, then the new TAs will receive the message that the requirements and responsibilities of being a TA and graduate student can be satisfied, achieved, and enjoyed.

CONCLUSION

Overall, both mentors and ABCDs have the potential to add much to a basic course system. Having the opportunity to interact with experienced TAs who are genuinely interested in

and willing to pass along what they have learned about the academic system to newcomers can smooth the transition to graduate school for those new TAs. On the down side, mentors who are unqualified and/or unmotivated to handle the job can do considerable damage. Likewise, there are positives and negatives involved in incorporating assistants into the basic course system. When the ABCDs complement the course director and can work together with that individual as a team, much can be accomplished. Although the ABCDs' close relationship with "the boss" may cause some new TAs to wonder whether or not they can be trusted not to rush to the course director with confidences, reports of repeated interactions in which trust has been built filter quickly through the ranks of the teaching staff. Assistants who know when problems can be solved at their level and who are able to help TAs see when assistance from the BCD is desirable can do much to build solid relationships among the various components of the teaching staff. They also can help TAs to solve problems when they are still small. When the assistants have a good relationship with the course director, they are seen as credible sources of information about what is and what is not acceptable. Alternatively, when the assistants appear to be intimidated by the course director or appear not to value his or her input, their influence on new TAs can be detrimental. Consequently, as is the case in most organizations, building positive relationships among staff members appears to be the main overall key to success.

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TA Mentoring: Issues and Questions*

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The extensive use of graduate teaching assistants (TAs) as instructors in higher education (Eble, 1987) has spawned concern for ways to maximize their teaching effectiveness. The speech communication discipline has shared this concern (see, for example, Buerkel-Rothfuss & Gray, 1990). One technique that currently is being explored by educators and researchers in speech communication is the use of mentoring with TAs (Avery & Gray, 1992; Bort, 1992; Buerkel-Rothfuss & Fink, 1992; Haleta, 1992; Waggenspack, 1992).

The published literature about mentoring shows that the concept has been prominent in the literature for only about 20 years (Speizer, 1981). Further, the terminology surrounding mentoring is new enough that descriptors such as "mentor" or "sponsor" are not found listed by themselves, making it difficult for educators to access available information.

The current interest in a potentially useful TA training and supervision technique coupled with a lack of published literature aimed at the needs of a TA mentoring program are the basis for this research. This paper will: (a) delineate issues to be addressed by educators interested in starting or changing a TA mentoring program, (b) share feedback from educators who have experience with TA mentoring programs,

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(c) present some questions to guide educators deciding about implementing/changing mentoring programs for TAs, and (d) provide a bibliography of literature to guide those interested in integrating these ideas into a TA mentoring program. The information presented in this paper comes from several sources. First, data from a questionnaire given to the 60+ participants of the Midwest Basic Course Director's Conference (MBCDC) in Cedar Rapids, IA in February, 1993, and notes taken during an hour-long discussion at that conference form the foundation of this paper. These participants consisted of people interested in the basic course in speech communication: administrators, basic course directors (BCDs), researchers, instructors and TAs. In addition, research on and experience with mentoring by the authors (e.g., as conference participants, as basic course director or assistant basic course director) enhance the ideas presented.

ISSUES

In order to assess mentoring as a possible technique in the arsenal of TA training and development, four issues will be highlighted: (a) choosing a guiding definition; (b) deciding on broad program goals; (c) implementing a mentoring format; and (d) choosing, training, and supervising mentors.

Choosing a Guiding Definition

The first issue is the definition of mentoring to be used in the program. Educators must define the term conceptually to guide decisions made in the use of mentors. This section provides some definitions of mentoring that have been found in the literature.

Defining "mentor" is not easy. Labels such as role model, sponsor, peer counselor, advisor, etc. often are used interchangeably with the construct "mentor" (Avery & Gray, 1992).

Further clouding the issue is that many published articles do not state the behaviors/outcomes attached to the word mentor, making it appear as though it was, indeed, one universal behavior/set of behaviors.

Kemper (1968) defined a mentor as a person who "possesses skills and displays techniques which the actor lacks...and from whom, by observation and comparison with his [her] own performance the actor can learn" (pp. 31-45). Hill, Bahniak, and Dobos (1989) described a possible view of mentors in the professional world as "informal tutors who take a parental interest in a younger, less experienced protégé" (p. 15). Another possible definition they posited was that mentoring could be a "communication relationship in which a senior person supports, tutors, guides, and facilitates a junior person's career development" (p. 15). Hill, Rouner, and Bahniak (1987) offered still another definition: Mentoring is a "process whereby individuals within a formal social system offer and receive information and support from one another in a one-way or reciprocal manner, within that system" (p. 4). Waggenspack (1992) summarized Kram's view of mentors as "providing career development/professional roles, which facilitate mentee's upward mobility, and psychosocial roles, which provide nurturance and personal support for the development of professional identity" (p. 2). Dreher and Ash (1990) viewed mentors as models who provide the mentée with information about organizational beliefs and values and set an example for what it takes to be successful in the particular environment.

These definitions contain subtle differences that could impact on decisions made in a mentoring program. For example, one definition only embraces the use of a "senior" person as a mentor. Another definition describes the mentor/mentee relationship only in terms of what the mentee does: By observation and comparison the mentee learns from the mentor. Such differences seem important as they can affect the choices made in a mentoring program, such as who

will be used as mentors, whether direct observation of the mentor at work is needed, and so on. In addition, a variety of definitions implies that candidates for mentors and mentees may have differing expectations about the relationship; failure to clarify the expectations for the relationship could undermine its success.

The participants of the MBCDC described programs that viewed mentoring from many differing perspectives. Indeed, about the only commonality was that there was some form of one-on-one contact between the mentor and mentee. Deciding on the definition that will ground a particular program seems to be an early issue for an educator to confront. The definition impacts on almost all other choices made and serves to clarify the nature of a particular program so participants share an overall concept of the mentor/mentee relationship.

Deciding on Broad Program Goals

A second issue to consider is the broad goals of the mentoring program. Each mentor/mentee pair well may develop its own particular goals; however, deciding on broad goals will help with other decisions of implementation. Five of the possible areas in which to develop goals follow: (a) orientation, (b) social, (c) teaching, (d) graduate work, and (e) expertise.

1. Orientation. Some programs use mentoring to acclimate new TAs to the community, school, department, course, etc. An experienced TA who takes the time to show the new TA around the campus, has maps of the town available, and so on can cut down on the stress of getting lost, etc. Such a mentor may be useful only for the weeks/months prior to coming to graduate school and the first few weeks after arrival on campus.
2. Social. Other programs view mentoring as a way of breaking the ice for the new TA. Starting off the program with a specific person designated to introduce

the new TA to other TAs, invite the new person to parties, provide transportation to and introductions at department get-togethers, etc. can be a way to help socialization and acculturation during the first days of graduate school. This social mentor may serve a purpose during the first semester/term and then fade from the new TA's life as new friends and other TAs fill this social role.

3. Teaching. One important broad goal may be to increase teaching effectiveness. This could be done by having a person designated to share ideas and materials, observe the new TA teaching and allow the new TA to observe the mentor's teaching, provide feedback on observations, discuss problems and philosophies associated with teaching, etc. This mentor may be chosen after the TA has come to campus, and the pairing can be made based on common interests, teaching philosophies, teaching styles, etc. Both parties may want some choice in the establishment of this relationship, particularly if this relationship is to last throughout the new TA's tenure. On the other hand, pairing an experienced TA with a new TA just for the first semester/term of the new TA's assistantship may be a less threatening and time-intensive way of giving the new TA some formal way to discuss teaching ideas and problems.

4. Graduate Work. Another way to use a mentor is as an academic advisor. This mentor might be available to help with choice of classes, help design a program to meet the TA's long-term professional goals, keep track of the progress of the TA academically, help provide opportunities for research or other professional development endeavors, help the TA put together a professional portfolio, and so on. As with the on-going teaching mentor, this pairing may work best with

some choice on the part of the mentor and mentee based on some common interests, and so on. The comprehensive nature of this relationship may mean that it would work best if it began early in the TA's program and continued through graduation.

5. Expertise. A less-used mentoring relationship is that of TA and "expert." The expert mentors don't have an on-going relationship with any one mentee. Rather, such mentors are chosen because of their areas of expertise and so offer counseling, ideas, tutoring, etc. in that area. Mentors may be in the TA's department or may not, depending on the reason the TA is seeking a mentor (e.g., a TA in education may go to a faculty member in that department for ideas on lesson planning, but would seek a faculty mentor in speech communication for tips about speech anxiety). Mentors may be designated by an area of strength outside of their professional skills (e.g., strong interpersonal skills, good listener, knowledgeable about financial institutions in town, strong background in housing) they would be willing to share with TAs.

This list of broad program goals is not meant to be exhaustive, but it does show the diverse goals possible. However, as the ideas presented under each goal imply, it may be difficult for a single person to meet a variety of goals. More than one mentoring relationship may have to be a part of a mentoring program with diverse program goals. Carefully choosing/creating broad program goals that fit a particular program's needs for its TAs is the most effective strategy to employ and will affect many of the decisions that follow.

Implementing a Mentoring Format

A third issue is that of choosing a program format. Speech communication seems to use mentors in a variety of formats.

Three of those formats are described in the following section: (a) informal, (b) formal, and (c) integrated.

The first format, informal, has been used widely throughout this past decade (see, for example, Chism, 1991; Darling, 1987). In this format, the mentee seeks out either a peer (new or experienced) or a member of the faculty and begins a relationship that hopefully would lead to the professional and even psychosocial development of the mentee. The key factor in this form of mentoring is "choice." Mentees choose their own mentor based on what they observe and how comfortable they are around the individual. Some individuals at the MBCDC agreed that this form of mentoring occurred at virtually every institution, whether it be through a faculty member the TA related to and sought advice from or through peer associations that naturally developed. While there is much to be said for the value of these naturally-occurring relationships, it seems quite possible that some of the values of mentoring (getting feedback from a role model, having regularly scheduled times to share philosophies, having someone designated to introduce you to others, etc.) would not be met through such informal avenues. It also is important to note that it is likely that these informal relationships still will develop in addition to any formal relationships set up as part of a mentoring program.

The second format, formal, also has been used widely (see, for example, Buerkel-Rothfuss & Fink, 1992; Jensen & McKinney, 1993). In this format, a person or group of people (administrator, BCD, assistant BCD, faculty) selects a mentor for the new TA. At times, this pairing is based on information such as the mentee's stated interests and goals; at other times, it is a random pairing. Sometimes formal pairings are made prior to the new TA coming to campus; sometimes the pairings are made after information is shared and based on some commonality. The mentor could be another new peer, an experienced peer, a faculty member, or even a supervisor. Participants at the MBCDC seemed to favor pairing the BCD

with new TAs and/or the experienced TA with a new TA. Typically, these formal mentoring pairs are from the same discipline. Such formal programs are, at times, mandatory for new and experienced TAs and even for faculty members. Others are completely voluntary for all participants; still others are mandatory for new TAs and voluntary for the mentors. Choice is seen by many educators as an important aspect of the pairings. In addition, someone designated to make the pairings, train people, share information, oversee meetings, conduct evaluations, and so on also seems to be a critical part of the effectiveness of the formal mentoring programs. Incentives for mentors also can be a consideration. In one mentoring program discussed at the MBCDC, approximately six experienced TAs are chosen competitively to act as mentors; these TAs receive $1,000 scholarships to serve as mentors for the year. Many educators at the MBCDC argued that mentors should be selected based on solid leadership skills, willingness to give time to the TA, and so on. (For a more thorough discussion of mentor characteristics, see Avery & Gray, 1992.)

The third format, integrated, has not been used as often as the others. The best example of the integrated format is described by Waggenspack (1992) in her menu-driven mentoring program. This program basically sets up a "bank" of mentors from which the mentees can make "withdrawals." The mentors are not limited to the department, but are selected from across campus by areas of expertise. For example, mentors from a counseling department might be available to a TA questioning the decision to continue seeking a graduate degree, mentors from an education department might be available to tutor beginning instructors in classroom management, and so on. Mentees can have many mentors to help with their diverse interests and concerns. It is Waggenspack's belief that the mentee has much more to gain from seeking the advice/support from a variety of people, thereby utilizing the expertise of each mentor. Furthermore, Waggenspack

asserts that this prevents burnout because mentors would be advising only in their specific area of competence. The benefits of such a format seem plentiful. Drawbacks include the university-wide commitment required and the need to oversee the mentoring program on a large scale. In addition, an intimate relationship built on trust, multiple shared experiences, and ongoing, emotional support well may be missing.

Each of the three formats have been used at various institutions. Ideally, some combination of the formats would best serve TAs (or even adjunct and temporary instructors) as they strive for success in their roles as basic course instructors and graduate students. This ideal, however, has not been demonstrated through systematic assessment and, perhaps more pragmatically, may not be possible at a given institution. The choice of a format is an issue any educator using a mentoring program must address within the constraints of the particular institution.

Choosing, Training, and Supervising Mentors

A fourth issue educators must address is the choice, training, and supervision of mentors. The definition and broad goals that guide the program may provide direction in this area. Two of the questions and possible answers about mentoring are listed below: How should mentors be chosen, and what training and supervision of mentors will be conducted?

1. How should mentors be chosen?

   Mentors from the TA's department may have the advantages of understanding department politics, knowing the content of the course or courses the TA is teaching, having access to other people who know/work with the TA to facilitate problem solving, having credibility in the professional area of the TA, and so on. On the other hand, mentors from other

departments may not be as involved in face-saving needs of the department and so may be better advocates for the TA, may allow the TA to choose people with expertise in particular concerns, etc.

Another choice centers around the use of a supervisor, faculty or peers. Peers may be less threatening to new TAs. It can be hard to disclose problems and lack of knowledge to a faculty member in the department. Other new TAs may be a good psychological support system, but they may not be able to offer much information and advice due to their own lack of experience. Experienced TAs may be able to offer some of the information and wisdom that comes with at least a semester of experience, and may still be less threatening than a faculty member. Faculty members probably provide the most comprehensive knowledge base, but they may not be as willing or able to help out with the emotional support often needed by a TA. A supervisor may be skilled in both the information, skills and emotional needs of the TAs, but may be seen as too threatening to disclose to because of the power of the supervisor over the employment of the TA.

2. What training and supervision of mentors will be conducted?

Given the many different issues posed in this paper, it would be foolish to expect mentors to all have the same definitions, ideas of format, beliefs about goals, etc. Add the TAs' attitudes and beliefs into that mix, and there is bound to be confusion unless steps are taken to clarify the goals and expectations of the program for everyone. In addition, it would be naive to believe that every potential mentor has the skills and understandings to mentor a new TA effectively. Even if screening is done to make sure that a decided-upon

list of necessary characteristics is met before mentors are chosen, mentors likely still will need some training. A mentor may be a strong teacher but may not know steps to take to improve someone else's teaching. A mentor may be able to conduct personal research but may need help finding ways to include an unskilled partner. Training that gives needed information about expectations for the relationship and gives the mentor needed information and skills to perform effectively as a mentor was seen by the MBCDC participants as a key element in a successful program.

In addition, supervision that tries to prevent problem areas from growing into massive conflicts, that rewards the participants and keeps them feeling valued, that reminds them of the benefits of the program, that keeps them informed about meetings and paperwork, etc. also is important to the program. The discussion at the MBCDC showed a strong belief that mentoring programs can break down because problems arise that the mentor or mentee do not know how to solve and so the relationship disintegrates. Supervision was seen as a key factor in preventing this type of breakdown.

FEEDBACK FROM EDUCATORS WITH MENTORING PROGRAMS

Through the MBCDC discussion and questionnaire, many educators who had experience with mentoring programs gave their insights. This next section outlines their advice to others interested in setting up a mentoring program.

1. Many obstacles to an effective mentoring program were listed. The greatest appears to be the mentor's

time. The mentors must attend training sessions; at least an orientation program of expectations seems to be desirable. Mentors must make time for the mentee on a regular basis; suggestions of regularly-scheduled, weekly meetings between pairs and meetings a few times per semester/term with all mentees, mentors and the coordinator dominated the advice. Mentors also must make time to work on problems; the mentor may have to intervene with another professor, the mentor and mentee may need an outside person to help them compromise, etc. Other obstacles were a program too large to supervise or pair effectively, personality conflicts, lack of supervision throughout the program, resistance by the TAs to formalizing such relationships, and having to dismiss a TA mentor who was not doing the job well.

2. One piece of advice that a majority of the discussants agreed upon was the need for a coordinator for a mentoring program. Most of the obstacles listed above may be diminished if there is a coordinator of the program. Time problems can be tempered if mentors meet ahead of time and are informed about program expectations. Ongoing supervision also helps remind mentors and mentees that regular meetings are expected, etc. Some educators even suggested some simple paperwork could be reviewed by the coordinator (e.g., a quick form that lists the date of each meeting, the names of the mentor and mentee, what was discussed, future goals, and the next scheduled meeting time). The coordinator also would create and distribute questionnaires used for pairing mentors and mentees, make and monitor pairings, persuade TAs and mentors of the value of the program, work on building cohesion throughout the program, and handle general administrative tasks (assess the ongo-

ing effectiveness of the program, intervene in problems, and so on). The least effective programs discussed seem to be those where TAs are given no choice in participation or pairing and then left to function without ongoing training, intervention, supervision, assessment, etc.

3. The discussants described several strategies a coordinator might use to enhance the program. They advised the coordinator to have an open-door policy so that problems can be dealt with immediately before, as one participant stated, "they become destructive, and the program does more harm than good." The coordinator should be organized, provide structure for the program, and be flexible enough to adapt to needed changes. It was felt that frequent praise by the coordinator was a motivating factor for all involved. In addition, the coordinator was advised to seek feedback frequently. In addition to regular meetings, feedback could consist of quick response sheets. One idea offered was to ask the TAs, "What is it that other TAs are doing that you would like to be doing?" or "What is it that you think other TAs are getting that you are not?" These questions may get more specific feedback than would a request for problems. Similar responses sought from the mentor could be useful, too.

4. Another key element posited by the MBCDC participants was choice. Mentors may be more committed to giving the time needed to meet the new TAs' needs if they choose to take on this role. There are so many details and stresses associated with graduate education for both mentors and mentees that a forced program may start a relationship off in a negative way. Choosing to participate because all parties see some value in it seems to be the advice of the people who worked with mentoring programs. They did add that

choice may be more critical if the broad program goals go beyond just orientation or social needs which do not involve the intense commitment that other goals may require.

5. One suggestion to facilitate peer mentoring was to assign shared office space to the pairs. A possible way to decide on these pairings is to use the department secretaries. Often, they see the TAs during the first few days in a more informal way than do faculty, department chairs, or BCDs. The secretaries may be the best people to pair "like personalities," if that is a desired aspect of the mentoring pairings.
6. A last comment was made concerning the benefits of mentoring. One participant felt that mentoring can enhance the overall health of the department. Without an official mentoring program, TAs may feed off each others' misery, form cliques and believe rumors more easily. Mentoring can provide an outlet to check out information and involve the TAs in a variety of relationships. This participant felt strongly that, without mentors, destructive outcomes could cause TAs to leave the program in search of a more comfortable institution.

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE DECISION MAKING BY EDUCATORS

The first two sections of this paper have delineated some of the issues associated with TA mentoring programs and general feedback from educators who have had experience with mentoring programs. This next section incorporates the previous issues and advice and expands upon them to provide a step-by-step guide for an educator to use in creating a mentoring program with TAs. Posed are some of the questions

that might be asked to lay a foundation for a program that meets specific institutional needs and realities. Following each question is a list of ideas, garnered from the discussion and questionnaire from the MBCDC, that might be useful to consider. While not every question posed here will be useful/necessary in every situation, the questions given are a starting point from which any educator can begin gathering answers to guide the development of a mentoring program.

1. What overall definition or definitions of mentoring will be utilized?

   Ideas: role model, tutor, guide to career development, giver of information and support, provider of organizational beliefs and values, interpersonal support person, developer of teaching skills

2. What broad program goals and specific, individual goals will mentoring seek to accomplish?

   Ideas: orient to campus and department, establish social network, facilitate effective teaching, provide additional teaching resources, advise total graduate program, counsel in areas of expertise, handle crises, spot potential crises that should be shared with BCD, provide emotional support, encourage scholarly endeavors, develop professional skills, develop professional contacts, model professional behavior, work as a team on teaching and/or research projects

3. Who will design, oversee, evaluate and revise the program?

   Ideas: coordinator who could be the BCD, graduate director, department chair, experienced TA, interested faculty member

4. What resources are needed and available?

   Ideas: committed mentors, coordinator to train/supervise mentors and mentees, coordinator readily available to problem solve, incentives for mentors

5. Will design input be sought from all interested parties?

   Ideas: BCD, TA supervisors, faculty, department chair, mentors, new and experienced TAs

6. What are the TAs' needs (based on their backgrounds and experiences) that a mentor could meet?

   Ideas: is available on a regularly-scheduled basis, is available during times of crises, is knowledgeable about teaching strategies, is empathic with non-traditional students' needs, shares teaching and/or research interests, shares teaching resources, is willing to introduce the TA to other professionals, is willing to include the TA in scholarly projects, is willing to help solve problems

7. How can the TAs' needs be discerned?

   Ideas: questionnaire prior to starting program, interview, assessment by coordinator based on prior experience with TAs of similar backgrounds

8. What are characteristics of an effective mentor, given the goals of this program?

   Ideas: is willing to give time needed to the TA, is willing to let mentee observe the mentor at work, is willing to share resources, is willing to work with a partner on projects, shows patience with an unskilled partner, has the desire to facilitate the growth of a new scholar/teacher, uses a democratic or cooperative leadership style, is willing to participate in training to develop skills needed to mentor effectively, is willing to see the relationship through problematic times, has

good listening skills, holds a specified academic degree, has taught certain classes, has published research

9. How can qualified mentors be recruited?

   Ideas: assigned by the department, cooperative program within university, volunteers, everyone participates

10. What incentives and support do the mentors need/want?

    Ideas: financial reward, reassigned time, additional student help with research or teaching to compensate for time given to mentoring, no other committee assignments, entry for job seeking or promotion/tenure case, recognition by department of value of program, someone who oversees the program for help

11. How can the needed incentives and support be obtained?

    Ideas: commitment of department and/or university, backing of graduate school, persuasive messages of benefits to TAs by coordinator

12. What ground rules, expectations, and so forth for the mentoring program and relationship need to be established?

    Ideas: mentors must attend training sessions, mentees must attend orientation sessions, pairs must have a specific meeting time set up each week, mentee can call mentor at home, pairs must meet four times per semester/term, all must attend a biweekly meeting with the coordinator and all participants

13. How can the benefits of having a mentor (see the ideas listed after Question 6) and the rules and expectations be communicated to mentees?

Ideas: written description of program prior to coming to campus, general meeting during orientation

14. What procedure will be used to assign mentees to mentors?

    Ideas: random assignment, match by coordinator by research or teaching interests/areas of expertise, assignment based on teaching schedule, match by gender, choice of participants

15. When will the program begin?

    Ideas: before the start of the first semester/term, during the first semester/term, whenever the mentee chooses

16. What guidelines are in place for problem intervention?

    Ideas: coordinator is available to meet with pairs, designated experienced TA meets with people individually

17. What strategies for assessment of effectiveness of current pairs are in place?

    Ideas: weekly meetings, monthly written evaluations by each person, suggestion box for anonymous comments

18. What avenues for changing mentors are in place?

    Ideas: submit a written request to the coordinator, meet with the graduate director for assessment of the need for/desirability of the change

19. What written documents exist so that the details of the mentoring program are clearly articulated?

    Ideas: a written description is given to all new TAs and mentors prior to the start of the program, a mentoring handbook is given to all participants

20. How will the effectiveness of the mentoring program be evaluated?

    Ideas: written feedback throughout each semester/term, verbal assessment during general meetings helped on a regular basis, anonymous feedback turned in at the end of each year, interviews done by the coordinator at the end of each year with all participants, inclusion of both mentors and mentees in an informal evaluation meeting each year

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF MENTORING LITERATURE

The ideas provided in this paper are meant to be a starting point for an educator's personal information gathering on mentoring. However, another aspect of any educator's search for information inevitably leads to the published literature to get a more comprehensive view of a new idea. The lack of published literature in mentoring with TAs, the lack of uniformity in terminology and the diversity of fields in which mentoring literature is published make this literature review a complex task. In a further attempt to aid any educator's desire to read what has been published in a variety of disciplines, a bibliography is offered as a starting point for such a literature review. It is hoped that this will make the personal task easier for anyone undertaking the challenge! (See the Appendix for an extended bibliography of mentoring literature.)

CONCLUSION

Mentoring relationships can be a useful strategy in TA training and development. The commitment to providing

quality education and challenges for graduate students causes educators to seek ways to enhance the overall graduate experience. In addition, the use of TAs in undergraduate education in our field mandates that we continue to seek ways to increase the effectiveness of TA teaching in particular. When faced with the reality and/or possibility of "certifying" TAs before allowing them to teach college classes, techniques that could increase their skill level are being sought perhaps more than ever. Mentoring is a strategy that may enhance graduate education and strengthen the TAs' teaching skills. When asked about the effectiveness of the TA mentoring programs they used, participants at the MBCDC generally were pleased. However, many felt that a lack of guidelines for developing their programs resulted in much wasted effort and time. This paper has shared the collective wisdom of some educators involved in mentoring programs that may give future program planners some needed direction. Ultimately, we hope that more people will believe, as did one educator at the MBCDC, that "mentoring is a great idea, and your questionnaire has motivated me to consider initiating such a program."

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APPENDIX

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Meeting Certification Requirements For Teacher Certification Through the Basic Course

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In the 1980's education in the United States experienced unprecedented scrutiny and criticism which resulted in the identification of serious shortcomings. For example, a U.S. Department of Labor report claimed that in spite of efforts at improvements of schools during the 1980's, "students were performing essentially no better at the end of the decade than they were at the beginning." (April 1992. p. 7).

Among the many responses designed to improve education in the 1990's has been the strengthening of teacher education programs. Many institutions have recently made admission requirements more rigorous for teacher education programs and some states now require satisfactory completion of special tests to gain certification. Among the ideas for improving teacher preparation is the suggestion that demonstrated communication proficiency should also be a condition for licensure.

The recognition that effective communication skills is a requisite for teaching effectiveness is not new. Prior to the 80's, both education and communication professional organizations recognized the need for these skills. Among professional educational associations who have recognized the need for effective communication skills by teachers include the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

(1979) and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (1980). At its 1980 annual meeting in Dallas, the latter organization resolved that "oral communication skills" should be assessed for entry or continuance in a teacher education program. Among communication professionals who have addressed the role of communication skills in teaching are Rubin and Feezel who note that "abilities to carry on effective interpersonal relations with others, to speak clearly and concisely, to lead and interact in group environments, and to listen with understanding and empathy are most important for all teachers" (Rubin & Feezel, 1985).

Unfortunately, general recognition of the importance of communication skills for teachers for more than fifteen years has yet to be translated into clearly defined communication competency expectations within teacher education curriculums. A recent report by a subcommittee of the Committee on Assessment and Testing of the Speech Communication Association claims that "The actual requirement of competency in teacher education programs is at best unclear and inadequate." One of the conclusions of this subcommittee is that "Speech communication educators have not developed a clear and consistent procedure for assessing oral communication abilities" (DeWitt, Bozik, Hay, Litterst, Strohkirch, & Yocum, 1991).

The Communication Department at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh directly addressed the concerns expressed by the subcommittee, both by developing clear statements of oral communication proficiency for teachers and by valid and reliable procedures for assessment. This article explains how this was accomplished by describing the specific procedures used to assess cognitive, public speaking, interpersonal and listening competencies.

INITIAL PLANNING

Effective on January 1, 1987, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction adopted a rule stating that all institutions which offer professional education programs leading to certification must submit to the Department for approval, written evidence that their programs comply with the requirements of Chapter PI4. The critical section of the chapter was PI 4.06(6)(a)2 which required "Demonstrated proficiency in speaking and listening as determined by the institution" (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1987).

The speech fundamentals course has been a requirement for education students for many years. The new Department of Public Instruction rule forced many Communication faculty to reflect upon the question of whether they were satisfied with the education students' "demonstrated proficiency." Until then, each instructor had been responsible for developing his or her own course and standardization of the proficiencies across all sections of the course was nonexistent.

Thus, an appropriate time had come for the staff to define "proficiency in speaking and listening" and to develop procedures for assessing student performance. With the support of an institutional grant, the staff worked on the development of the course for several weeks during the summer to address the questions pertinent to a large-scale assessment effort.

The major question addressed was "What does the proficient communicator know and do?" We agreed that proficiency should include public speaking, as well as interpersonal and listening skills. This decision was based upon the content of the textbook for the course and a survey of employers regarding communication skills necessary for career success (Willmington, 1986). Definitions of the specific communication proficiencies we use are developed in the following four sections: assessing cognitive proficiency, assessing public speak-

ing proficiency, assessing interpersonal proficiency, and assessing listening proficiency.

ASSESSING COGNITIVE PROFICIENCY

Most theorists agree that the proficient communicator is able to demonstrate both cognitive and behavioral skills. Wiemann and Backlund, for example, argue that both non-behavioral (cognitive) aspects of the communication process and specific references to actual communication behavior are necessary for a complete understanding of the communication behavior of individuals (Wiemann & Backlund, 1980).

Because we concurred that knowledge of the basic principles of communication is an essential part of communication proficiency, we began the task of developing an instrument to assess this knowledge. Cognitive proficiency is properly and most efficiently measured by a pencil and paper test. Thus, faculty committees developed questions to assess knowledge of public speaking, interpersonal communication, and listening.

The outcome was four equivalent test forms — each consisting of 60 multiple-choice questions. The determination of the number of questions in each form of the test was based upon two factors: the amount of space devoted to the topic in the textbook used for the course and the amount of time devoted to the topic in the teaching of a typical section of the course. This is consistent with the advice of Lindquist, (1963).

The four forms of the exam were administered to sections of the basic course during the fall semester. Item analysis was performed on the questions to check for their ability to discriminate and their difficulty level. The discrimination measure examines whether persons who have high overall scores on the test select the correct answer to a question more frequently than do persons who have low scores. Questions

found to discriminate inadequately were given to the appropriate proficiency team for revision.

A second measure was the difficulty level of the question (e.g., "What percent of the subjects are able to answer the question correctly?"). Questions answered correctly less than 30% of the time (too difficult) or correctly more that 70% of the time (too easy) were given to the appropriate proficiency team for repair.

The exams were revised based on the item analysis and again administered to over 30 sections of the course the following semester. Based on these results, we established initial norms for the test banks. The mean score on the 60-item test banks was 43.5 with a standard deviation of 5.6. Using this data, we determined that a minimum score of 33 would be required to demonstrate cognitive proficiency.

To insure that the cognitive paper and pencil measure is reliable and valid, ongoing monitoring of the discriminating and of the difficulty levels of questions is required. In addition, norms need to be revised as necessary.

ASSESSING PUBLIC SPEAKING PROFICIENCY

To measure proficiency in pubic speaking, it was necessary to develop a student task that allows the instructor to measure the student's skill with the characteristics enumerated in the definition of proficiency. Although all instructors who teach the basic course required graded public speaking assignments, the nature of these speeches varied widely from instructor to instructor. However, because all instructors assigned at least one informative speech, it was decided that the public speaking task would be an informative speech. To aid in the standardization of this assignment, a one-page handout for students outlining the specific requirements for the speech was prepared. (See Appendix A).

It was also decided that each instructor would, as a minimum, assign two other speeches. One of these would be a persuasive speech and the nature of the other speaking assignment would be left to the instructor's discretion. To avoid basing the assessment on only one performance, it was decided that to be deemed proficient in public speaking, a student must have a *C* average on these three speeches. A *C-* average would not meet proficiency requirements.

The next step was to develop a rating form to assess the public speaking skills described in the proficiency profile. The following traits were included in the form: introduction/ conclusion; speech purpose; message organization; supporting materials; audience adaptation; language/style; vocal usage; and physical elements.

We experimented with 3, 5, and 7-point evaluation scales measuring each of the eight skill areas. Our experiments determined that the items would be most effectively measured using a 5-point scale, with scores of 1 and 2 designating a lack of proficiency, 3 equaling a minimal expectation for proficiency, and 4 and 5 representing scores well above the minimal expectation for proficiency. We decided that if students average a 3 (minimally proficient) on the eight-point scale, for a total score of 24, we would deem them proficient as a public speaker. (See Appendix B).

Since completing this project, differential weighting of individual items on the rating form has been discussed. Concern has been voiced that some of the individual items should be weighted more heavily than others. Further research will be done on this issue.

ASSESSING INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION PROFICIENCY

The question of how to define and assess interpersonal communication proficiency has received much attention from

communication scholars in the past decade. After study and discussion of the subject, we identified seven areas of interpersonal communication proficiency. The seven areas are physical involvement, vocal usage, promoting interaction, language usage, listening, empathy, and self-disclosure. (See Appendix C).

To assess interpersonal communication proficiency, we sought to develop a single student performance assignment that would enable him or her to demonstrate the skills identified above. The final product was a structured interpersonal encounter of approximately five minutes. In this encounter, the instructor, or a trained initiator, engages the student in a conversation in a rather casual manner, but at the same time making sure that certain planned prompts are given during the conversation designed to allow the student to demonstrate, or fail to demonstrate, each of the seven interpersonal proficiency behaviors.

Some of the behaviors such as physical involvement, vocal usage, and language usage are assessed throughout the encounter. Others require the use of a prompt. For example, to assess proficiency in promoting interaction, at some time during the course of the conversation, the initiator can pause and invite the student to introduce a subject that might be appropriate for the two of them to discuss. If the student is able to readily introduce a subject that related to an interest, a viewpoint, or a frustrating situation described earlier by the initiator, the student can also be credited with listening or possibly empathy skills. Empathy is also assessed by introducing a subject that allows students to express an understanding of a feeling or a point of view different from their own. For example, non-Native American students can be invited to look at the use of school mascot names perceived as offensive by certain Native Americans. Empathic students may express their own personal feelings on a subject, but they should also be able to recognize feelings different from their

own. The other two behaviors assessed are listening and self disclosure. (See Appendix D.)

Students are rated on a 1-5 point scale for each of the seven behaviors. They are deemed proficient if they score a total of 21 points which means they have to average a 3 rating for the seven behaviors.

ASSESSING LISTENING PROFICIENCY

The listening committee searched for a standardized listening test that we could employ to assess listening skills as we defined them. Unsatisfied with the commercial tests available, two of our faculty produced the Steinbrecher-Willmington Listening Test.* The test is on videotape, contains 55 questions, and takes 45 minutes to administer. Students are asked to respond to 13 separate messages or interactions seen on the video. Included are a four-minute speech, three brief announcements, a set of directions, a description, five scenes involving dyads, three statements using evidence, and three statements using reasoning.

The test includes three types of listening: comprehensive, critical, and empathic. The questions concerning the types of listening include 39 out of 55 focusing on comprehension, 12 focusing on critical listening, and 4 focusing on empathic listening. Based on normative data for the test, we set a score of 25 as the minimum necessary for proficiency.

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* For more information about the Steinbrecher-Willmington Listening Test contact M. Steinbrecher (414-235-7736) or C. Willmington (414-424-4420) at Dept. of Communication, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, Oshkosh, WI 54901.

ASSESSING TRANSFER STUDENTS

UW-Oshkosh accepts approximately 100 transfer students annually who apply for admission into the College of Education. Before students can be accepted into the education program, one of the requirements they must fulfill is to pass our public speaking, interpersonal, and listening proficiency tests. Although these students have usually received credit for a basic course through the transfer process, they have not necessarily demonstrated minimal levels of communication proficiency as required by our program. To accommodate the College of Education, the assessment of transfer students occurs periodically throughout the year. Students receive information in the mail outlining the procedures that will be followed for assessing their interpersonal, public speaking, and listening skills. Additionally, they are given handouts specifying the requirements for a 5-6 minute informative speech and the criteria by which they will be assessed.

Each student is evaluated by two communication faculty members who teach the basic course, one of whom evaluates the student's public speaking performance, while the other instructor assesses the interpersonal skills. Afterwards, the student is given the listening test. A transfer student must receive the same minimum scores as students in our basic course to pass the proficiency requirement and be admitted into the professional education program. The student pays a $15.00 fee to cover the expenses of this additional assessment procedure.

This same out-of-class procedure is also used to assess students who have failed a specific component of the proficiency test while enrolled in the basic course. This method allows a second opportunity for the student to be reevaluated on the relevant communication skills. Additionally, students who decide to major in education after completing the basic course may also use this procedure to become certified as

minimally proficient, allowing them admission into the university's teacher education program.

EVALUATION OF THE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

A typical response of communication departments to challenges from sources such as Colleges of Business, Education, or in our case, a state Department of Education, is to say, "Take our course. If you pass with a *C* or better, you're O.K." We note two major concerns with this simple and quick response.

First, bear in mind that the course projected as meeting the need was undoubtedly designed to address other perceived educational needs. Further, faculty members teaching the course have their own agendas and reasons for teaching the course a certain way. Consequently, they are unlikely to immediately abandon what they have been doing in favor of more directly addressing a new purpose of the course.

Second, we discovered that while our staff included "communication proficiency" as a course goal, the course grade was an imperfect indication of student proficiency. Instructors assign grades based on several factors other than communication proficiency. Instructors typically include in their calculation of course grades such things as class attendance and participation, performance on quizzes, and completing work on time. Even if they do not recognize it, it is suspected that effort and improvement may figure into the evaluation. While possibly justified as considerations in student evaluation, these factors may relate very little to "communication proficiency" by any standard, thus calling into question the assumption that a course grade in a basic communication course is an accurate measure of student proficiency.

A strength of the UW-Oshkosh plan is that we address communication proficiency as an essentially independent entity from the course grade. In this way faculty are confident

that when they sign the proficiency form for students and submit them to the College of Education, the students have indeed demonstrated observable proficiency in communication as we define it.

Any proficiency assessment plan needs to be evaluated by appropriate criteria. The two most basic criteria are validity and reliability.

Validity

We have worked for validity by tying both the pencil and paper tests and the performance tests directly to the definitions of proficiency we developed. The definitions reflected the knowledge and skills considered appropriate as found in communication literature and survey of employers mentioned earlier.

Validity of the pencil and paper test is enhanced by the inclusion of a certain number of questions pertaining to the major topic areas identified in the textbook. As mentioned earlier, the number of questions per topic area reflects the emphasis given to each area in the course. Validity of the performance tests in public speaking and interpersonal communication was promoted by the development of rating scales which insured proper attention to the eight traits that constitute public speaking proficiency and the seven traits that constitute interpersonal proficiency. The number of questions on the listening test involving comprehension, evaluation, and empathy were determined according to what appear to be representative of the portion of time those kinds of listening are employed.

Reliability

The reliability of the various assessment instruments varies. The Kuder-Richardson #20 (KR20) test of reliability for the paper and pencil test averaged slightly above .7 for

classes taking the test in a single year. The KR20 for the Steinbrecher-Willmington Listening Test averages slightly below .7 for the same time period. Most testing theorists would accept these reliabilities as satisfactory (Cangelosi, 1982).

The reliability of the public speaking and interpersonal performance tests are more difficult to determine. The whole staff assembles periodically to review and independently rate videotapes of student performances. Comparison of these ratings shows interpersonal rating reliability averages .7 or above. Surprisingly, the public speaking reliability has been lower, often around .5. Reliability quotients vary greatly among the factors evaluated. For example, the message organization factor correlates highly with overall ratings, while the use of supporting materials fails to show much correlation with overall ratings. We cannot calculate reliability scores for either public speaking or interpersonal performances in the individual classrooms because there is only a single rating given by a single instructor.

CONCLUSION

The Communication Department at UW-Oshkosh has made a direct response to the rule of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction that teacher preparation institutions recommend students for certification only after they have demonstrated proficiency in speaking and listening. Proficiency is demonstrated by certain key tasks completed by students enrolled in the basic communication course. Assessment instruments have been developed and are used to assess knowledge of communication principles and performance in public speaking, interpersonal communication, and listening.

Since the institutionalization of this assessment program in 1987, the communication skills of hundreds of perspective education students have been evaluated. The vast majority of

them met or exceeded the assessment criteria. However, there are several students annually who must retake the cognitive, listening, and/or public speaking portions of the test. Some students never meet the minimal proficiency level and are prohibited from admission into the College of Education. A greater number of students may be initially deterred from seeking a teaching certificate because they have to demonstrate a minimum level of proficiency in their communication skills. In a profession that has continually graduated a surplus of students compared to job availability, such a deterrent factor may be beneficial.

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APPENDIX A

Speech to Inform

To demonstrate oral communication proficiency, you are to prepare a *speech to inform* which meets the following requirements:

1. Length: *5 - 7 minutes*
2. A speech which is *your original work.* Use of a speech constructed by another is not allowed and will result in automatic failure in this performance.
3. A speech which attempts to provide your audience with new information or new understanding about a subject or consequence.
4. A speech which is presented *extemporaneously;* that is, one which has been *carefully constructed* and which has been *practiced but not memorized* until it can be presented *fluently,* with the use of a *limited number of note cards.* Important: reading of the speech from a manuscript or from note cards will not be acceptable.

Evaluator Expectations for Speech Content:

1. *Develop an effective introduction* to your speech which:
   a. Arouses interest in the topic.
   b. Suggests why knowledge about the topic may be of importance to the speaker and the listener.
   c. Identifies your speech topic and focus in a clear purpose statement.
   d. Identifies main points to be covered in the body of the speech.

2. Develop an effective speech body:
    a. Main ideas are clearly identified by the use of such techniques as parallel wording, internal summaries and transitions.
    b. Ideas are organized effectively, using a suitable arrangement pattern for a speech to inform.
    c. *Supporting materials from at least 3 different quality (non- personal) sources are to be used* and you should *cite the sources as you use the material.* You may use appropriate personal experience as additional support.
    d. Visual aids may be used to increase the effective communication of your information (they are optional.) If used, they are expected to be:
        1. Purposefully selected and used.
        2. Neat, attractive and large enough
        3. Well-timed (shown only when discussing them.)
        4. Effectively positioned and well-handled (all can see them; they don't detract from your delivery.
    e. Adapt speech to the audience, which will consist of a UW-Oshkosh Communication Dept. faculty member. If given in a class 96-111 classmates will also be present.
3. *Develop a conclusion* which effectively reinforces your thesis.

Evaluator Expectations for Delivery

1. Use an extemporaneous speaking style (see #4 on previous page)
2. Use effective eye contact

3. Demonstrate effective posture
4. Use effective gestures
5. Demonstrate effective vocal presentation: sufficient vocal enthusiasm, vocal variety, (pitch, rate & force), adequate volume, clear articulation, correct grammar, and avoidance of vocal clutter (vocal fillers, vocalized pauses, etc.)

APPENDIX B

Public Speaking Rating Form

Speaker Name _____

Rater Name _____

Score _____

Circle the single best response for each factor.

1. **Introduction/Conclusion** — Clearly develops an appropriate introduction and conclusion

1	2	3	4	5
Seriously Deficient	*Deficient*	*Minimally Competent*	*Clearly Competent*	*Highly Competent*

2. **Speech Purpose** — Speech clearly addresses the assigned purpose.

1	2	3	4	5

3. **Message Organization** — Uses a clear and appropriate organization pattern; uses appropriate transitions.

1	2	3	4	5

4. **Supporting Materials** — Uses and cites sources of materials to inform or persuade to achieve purpose.

1	2	3	4	5

5. **Audience Adaptation** — Message is appropriate for the audience, and occasion

1	2	3	4	5

6. **Language/Style** — Appropriate (avoids excessive use of slang, profanity), clear, correct grammar.

1	2	3	4	5

7. **Vocal Usage** — Expressive, varied; fluent, avoids excessive vocalized pauses/ fillers; appropriate volume, rate; clear articulation; correct pronunciation; suitable vocal quality.

1	2	3	4	5

8. **Physical elements** — Effective eye-contact; posture, gestures, and/or movement used purposefully; sufficiently poised.

1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX C

Interpersonal Skills Rating Form

Speaker Name _____

Rater Name _____

Score _____

Circle the single best response for each factor.

1. **Physical Involvement** — Uses eye contact, facial expression, appropriate posture, gesture, and poise.

1	2	3	4	5
Seriously Deficient	*Deficient*	*Minimally Competent*	*Clearly Competent*	*Highly Competent*

2. **Vocal usage** — Expressive, varied; fluent, avoids excessive vocalized pauses/ fillers; appropriate volume, rate; clear articulation; correct pronunciation; suitable vocal quality.

1	2	3	4	5

3. **Promoting Interaction** — Initiates, sustains interaction; gives appropriate responses; shares conversation involvement.

1	2	3	4	5

4. **Language Usage** — Appropriate (avoids excessive use of slang, profanity), clear correct.

1	2	3	4	5

5. **Listening** — Listens carefully; gives appropriate feedback (picks up topic after interruption and able to summarize main topics).

1	2	3	4	5

6. **Empathy** — Responses show sensitivity to the ideas and feelings of others.

1	2	3	4	5

7. **Self-Disclosure** — Gives appropriate amount and type of information about self.

1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX D

Interpersonal Encounter Questions

QUESTION	I.P. BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT
1. Hi _____. Your information card tells me _____, Can you tell me any more about that hobby, hometown, or previous communication courses/s?	Self-disclosure
2. The Speech Fundamentals course has now become a required course for all students at this university. Do you agree with this requirement? Why or why not?	Self-disclosure
3. You've just finished your informative speech and I'd like to talk with you about it for just a few minutes.	Physical Involvement
a. Why did you select the particular topic?	Vocal Usage
b. Why did you think this was important information for the audience	Language Use
c. Why you thought about the people listening to the speech, what strategies did you use to adapt your information to the audience?	Assessed throughout the encounter
1. Were they successful?	
2. Why or why not? (Follow-up)	
4. This may be the first time you can vote in a political election.	Self-disclosure
a. Are you planning to vote?	
b. Do you believe voting is important? Why or why not?	
5. Let me ask you about a sensitive issue that is facing parents and educational professionals: School-age children that have contacted aids or have tested positive for the HIV virus.	

	a. Some communities are trying to keep these children from attending school. How do you feel about this?	Empathy
	b. Well, what about the fears of parents of healthy children? Do you think their concerns are legitimate?	
6.	What is your reaction to the Native American controversy over school and athletic mascots and team names that they find derogatory and offensive? Should teams be forced to change such names and mascots?	Empathy
7.	You know, I am really frustrated with my 8:00 a.m. speech class. The students just sit there, never participate, and appear to be sleeping. I've tried everything to get them involved in class discussion and activities and I've run out of ideas. I just don't know what to do.	Empathy
8.	I've been promoting the conversation so far. In the shot time we have left, what is one thing (about class or college) that you would like to talk about or ask me?	Promoting Interaction
9.	If someone were to ask you to identify the major topics we've talked about today, what would you say?	Listening
10.	Well, I've enjoyed talking with you	

Note: **These are sample questions and are not all used during a five to ten minute conversation.**

The Basic Course in Communication Theory: A Shift in Emphasis

Warren Sandmann

Leonard C. Hawes (1977) asks of communication theory that it, in a sense, go back to the beginning. Hawes wants to make sure that we in communication know just what it is we are studying before we start applying grand social scientific theories of communication (or borrowed theories from other disciplines such as psychology and sociology). In this essay, I am suggesting that we need to go even further back. In teaching the basic course in communication theory, I believe we need to question the basic assumptions which undergird communication theory.

We should do this questioning for at least three reasons. The first reason concerns the relationship between theoretical perspectives and communication. To start with the assumption that communication should be studied as a social science, as a means to " . . . understand and predict communicative arts . . ." (Hickson and Stacks, 1993, p. 261), greatly increases the chance that whatever communicative behavior we study will be interpreted within a scientific frame, thus producing a world which looks a lot like the inside of a laboratory. While this may be an accurate view of what the world looks like, it may not be. Operating solely within the frame of the social scientist makes it highly unlikely that we could create a different picture of the world.

This leads to the second reason to question the basic assumptions of the social scientific perspective on communication: There may be a better perspective. Conversely, of

course, there may not be. Unless we try to understand and therefore teach communication theory from other perspectives, we have no way of knowing which perspective actually does offer a better view. The final reason is one of pedagogy: We as teachers owe it to our students to present all possible and plausible perspectives on the study of communication. There is a pragmatic dimension to this reason as well. Not all communication programs across the United States operate from a social scientific perspective. To limit the study and teaching of communication theory, which may be the only general communication course for both communication majors and other students, to a social scientific perspective is to present a skewed view of what the discipline of communication is (or can be) all about.

This essay is not solely concerned with the emphasis on a social-scientific perspective. Others have offered extended critiques and defenses of the social scientific perspective, and a section of this essay introduces some of these critiques. What is more important than the perspective taken is the pedagogical approach aligned with taking one perspective as a given. As Edwin Black reminded communication theorists in 1965, it is not that the model being taught is presented as the paradigm method, it is the very idea of a monolithic model, of a dominant paradigm. The method overpowers the object of study. Communication theory is taught from an approach that emphasizes the acquisition and compilation of knowledge, not the critical questioning of such knowledge. This is the major concern of this essay: That treating communication theory as primarily a method of inquiry, with accepted and largely unquestioned procedures and assumptions, blocks and distorts much of what is being studied. The proposal is for a change in emphasis in the teaching of communication theory, for adopting a more critical perspective (not a critical model) for the teaching of communication theory. The need is not to stop teaching the basic ideas of standard communication theory, but to go beyond the stages of comprehension and

application, to the stages of analysis and criticism and even creation of theory. Certainly, some and maybe even many teachers of communication theory do this in the classroom now. But if that is the case, they are doing it in opposition to the content and methods suggested as standards in the field. The remainder of this essay will offer additional reasons for teaching communication theory from this critical perspective, and propose the outlines of how we can shift the emphasis in the teaching of communication theory.

According to a 1986 study, the basic communication course is often the only communication course to which non-majors are exposed. In a survey completed by Trank, Becker and Hall, 85 percent of colleges and universities reported that the basic course in communication was required of all non-majors. Instruction in the basic course generally follows one of three basic formats: Format number one involves instructing students in the theories of human communication. Trank (1990) terms this approach the interpersonal approach to the basic course. The second format is a public speaking approach to communication, where presentational skills are emphasized. The third basic format is described by Trank as a combination, or blend approach, where both presentational skills and human communication theories are taught.

Of these three formats, national surveys of communication programs indicate that the public speaking format seems to be the most popular format used. A 1985 survey of basic course programs (Gibson, Hanna & Huddleston) indicated that over half of the respondents were utilizing the public speaking format, with a third reporting that they used a combination approach, and the remainder divided between several varieties of communication theory approaches.

Despite this emphasis on presentational skills in the basic course, instruction in communication theory remains an important aspect of the basic course and the communication discipline. Approaches to the basic course that emphasize a theoretical dimension, or that call the course an introduction

to interpersonal communication, or human communication, or courses that utilize a combination approach, all require the teaching of theories of human communication. Even a course that emphasizes presentational skills (Sandmann, 1991) will still, to at least some extent, ground these skills in theory. Additionally, a course that introduces theories of human communication to majors in communication still fills a vital role, and can be thought of as the basic course *within* the discipline. As Hickson and Stacks (1993, p. 262) note, there seems to be an increasing interest in teaching communication theory at the introductory and undergraduate level.

It is for these reasons that a more thorough examination of instruction in introductory communication theory courses is needed. Whether this instruction is part of a basic course for all students, majors and non-majors, or whether this course more adequately serves as an introduction for communication majors, a better understanding of both the substance and the form of this course is important to the discipline.

In this essay I will first briefly describe standard approaches to teaching the communication theory course, with some examples from texts used in teaching an introductory communication theory course. This summary will focus on content of the texts, the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of the theories being taught, and the explicit and implied teaching methods for these courses. Included in the summary section will be a brief critique of the standard approaches, pointing out what may be some unexamined assumptions in the teaching of communication theory. The remainder of this essay will feature a proposal for an approach to teaching introductory communication theory that puts more emphasis on the critical nature of communication theory, on the links between communication and human understanding and knowledge, and on the function of communication in the uncovering, utilization and creation of knowledge. This approach is not designed to trash the dominant paradigm, but to problematize it. In this approach,

communication theory is thought of less as a body of knowledge to be transmitted to students, and more as an analytical tool for discovering the manner in which communication functions to create, recreate and reinforce knowledges. In other words, communication theory would be taught less as a set of theoretical perspectives to be comprehended and utilized, and more as an approach that focuses on the manner in which these theoretical perspectives create and recreate frameworks for understanding the world. Students would still be asked to comprehend these theories, but the course would go beyond comprehension to include a more critical perspective in which students would learn the skills to question these theories, along with the necessity to question these theories.

PART ONE: WHAT IS BEING TAUGHT?

Donaghy (1991) offers a detailed description of an approach to teaching communication theory as the basic course, including in this description a rationale for the course, objectives, a description of content and theoretical premises, and a description of teaching methods for the course, Donaghy's introductory communication theory course is designed for both majors and non-majors at his institution. He argues for the importance of the course based primarily on the growth within the communication discipline of a solid body of theoretical knowledge, a body that should be presented to all students in the field as early as possible in their education (p. 56).

This introductory communication theory course is based on a view of human communication as a social science. As such, this course devotes some time at the beginning to look at the theoretical perspective of social science, ". . . how knowledge is created, the process of inquiry, the nature and elements of theory, the scientific method, philosophical issues and the like" (p. 57). As Donaghy notes, the major purpose of

the course is to relate the study of communication theory to the study of other behavioral sciences.

As noted in the objectives section describing this approach, Donaghy's course is seen primarily as a course in which students are introduced to a group of selected theories about human communication, asked to become familiar with the basic concepts, issues and terminologies of a social scientific perspective, and then apply this knowledge in practical communication situations (p. 58). The course is taught as a lecture, with students responsible for readings, note-taking, some in-class activities, quizzes and formal examinations (pp. 63-64).

Donaghy's description of this introductory communication theory course may not necessarily be typical, but it is enlightening. Communication theory is grounded in the social sciences, though as Donaghy notes, the text he most commonly uses, Stephen Littlejohn's, does include communicative theories (Foucault, Derrida) that are not at home in the social sciences. This course is also primarily a course in knowledge acquisition, comprehension and application, and its lecture format prohibits much if any critical analysis of the material, at least as part of a class activity.

Hickson and Stacks (1993) offer an additional model for the teaching of communication theory. Like Donaghy, their approach is grounded in a social scientific perspective that pictures communication theory as a set of tools which students can utilize to " . . . know why certain communication strategies provide the best results, how to obtain the best possible communication outcome, and in general how to predict how their and others' communication will be received" (p. 261)[1] . Hickson and Stacks argue that in teaching commu-

[1]As a means to understand a perspective that is not grounded in a social science framework, contrast Hickson and Stacks' view of the purpose of studying communication theory with another perspective on communication, that of Jacques Derrida. A very concise description of the theory of deconstruction offers the idea that deconstruction is the study of "the

nication theory, there are seven basic questions which need to be addressed (p. 263). These questions arise from the social scientific framework adopted by the authors, and basically require students to comprehend the history and use of these theories.

Hickson, Stacks and Hill (1991) acknowledge the need to go beyond the basic assumptions of the different theoretical perspectives, but argue that the basic course in communication theory is not the place for this more critical perspective. The basic course, they state, should provide ". . . a treatment that is deep enough to provide the major assumptions and critical knowledge needed to understand a particular theory or approach, and sufficient to provide a base from which the student can move to more advanced treatments of the material" (p. xiii).

The problem with this approach, at least from the perspective adopted in this essay, is that simply requiring students to master the basic assumptions without providing them the skills to question those assumptions has the potential to lead students to understand communication only from those assumptions. The critical perspective is not only left untouched, it is dampened. More "advanced treatments of the material" would probably only mean more advanced treatments starting with the same assumptions, such as those that argue that the purpose of studying communication is to make better predictions about communicative behaviors (pp. xiii-xiv).

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impossibility of anyone writing or saying . . . something that is perfectly clear . . . [and] of constructing a theory or method of inquiry that will answer all questions . . ." (Stephens, 1994, p. 23). If communication theory *begins* from a perspective that privileges and even assumes the explanatory and predictive nature of communication, then there is little room left for theories that argue against this explanatory and predictive nature.

Another textbook designed for the introductory course in communication theory is Em Griffen's *A First Look at Communication Theory* (1994). Like Stacks, Hickson and Hill, Griffen argues for the need to place communication theory at the beginning of a student's study of communication. And like Stacks, Hickson, and Hill, Griffen argues for teaching introductory communication theory as primarily a course in knowledge acquisition. As Griffen notes, " . . . before students can integrate the leading ideas in our field, they need to have a clear understanding of what the theories are" (xvii). While Griffen is less apparent in a preference for a social scientific perspective than are Stacks, et. al., this preference is still there in his statement that these different communication theories should be integrated. The search for a meta-theory for communication studies is a search usually more closely associated with a social scientific perspective than with a humanistic perspective, as many humanistic perspectives, especially those that are loosely grouped under any number of "post-" headings, actively oppose the idea of meta-theory.

To briefly summarize, the standard approach to the teaching of communication theory is primarily an approach that emphasizes the transmission, comprehension and application of theoretical bodies of knowledge, knowledge that is approached as a "thing" to be studied, not primarily as a way of study. Additionally, the preferred approach to communication theory is the social scientific approach, which treats communication as a body of knowledge to be studied through a scientific lens in order to discover how the world works. The world is *a priori* accepted as the site for studying communicative behaviors, and at least part of the purpose of communication theory is to discover the *a priori* nature of both the physical and social world. Of course, this brief discussion can not deal with all of the complexities of these theoretical perspectives, but it does offer a starting point for further discussion.

PART TWO: A PROPOSAL

Leonard Hawes (1975) presents one proposal for a different approach to communication theory. Hawes explains, in response to a criticism from Lawrence Grossberg and Daniel J. O'Keefe (1975), his attempt to build a "human science" of communication by creating a rapprochement between objectivist/empiricist and subjectivist/ phenomenological epistemologies.[2] For Hawes, the basic distinction between social scientists operating from an objectivist/empiricist orientation and those operating from a subjectivist/phenomenological orientation is not necessarily in their epistemological approaches nor in their goals (p. 213). Both groups utilize various versions of the scientific method, and both aim to develop objectively verifiable theories. The difference lies in the origination of the data.

Those social scientists operating from the objectivist/ empiricist orientation start with an *a priori* conception of both the physical and social world; those social scientists operating from the subjectivist/phenomenological orientation accept the *a priori* physical world, but not the social world. The task of Hawes, then, is to demonstrate the manner in which those social scientists operating from the subjectivist/phenomenological orientation transform subjective behaviors and actions into objective data (p. 214).

Hawes discusses the work of the subjectivist/phenomenological oriented social scientist Alfred Schutz in demonstrating the manner in which subjective data can be transformed into objective data. Schutz uses the technique of typification. In observing the actions and behaviors of human beings, social scientists (and all others who operate in an intersubjective world) are unable to exactly understand and

[2]For the original exposition of this approach, see Hawes, 1973, "Elements of a Model for Communication Processes"

interpret those subjective behaviors. So in order to make sense of these subjective behaviors (and therefore transform them into objective data), we transform the actions and behaviors into "types" of behaviors so as to be able to assign meaning to these behaviors. As Hawes puts it, "we construct ideal types of typical others who enact typical courses-of-action" (p. 212).

Hawes program for creating a rapprochement between these two different perspectives on communication theory and research is important in understanding the need for a shift in the teaching of the basic course in communication theory. As Hawes notes, even those social scientists who operate from such seemingly disparate worlds as objectivist/empiricist and subjectivist/phenomenological share some of the same assumptions and the same goals. Even with an understanding of communication utilizing this epistemological rapprochement, the field of communication theory will still be interpreted through one dominant paradigm, that of the social scientist interested in "the connection of events in the social world" (p. 215). Such a perspective constrains and strongly predetermines the interpretation of human communication and the generally accepted view of how humans relate to each other and their world. It still makes it difficult to take a critical perspective on communication theory.

Why is it important that communication theory instruction take on a more critical aspect? Jo Sprague (1990), offers one answer. She identifies four fundamental goals of education in general and communication education in particular: transmitting cultural knowledge, developing students' intellectual skills, providing students with career skills, and reshaping the values of society (pp. 19-22). In providing a more critical aspect to the instruction of communication theory, we are allowed to go beyond the concept of simple transmission of knowledge (goal #1) to a more intellectually and philosophically demanding goal: Reshaping the values of society. It is important to note here, as Sprague does, that this

goal does not require nor imply that what is being called for here is revolution or revolt. Though Sprague cites Paolo Friere as one model for teaching, she also notes that this approach to communication has a long, classical history, a history that grounds it more in the tradition of standard critical thinking than in the tradition of revolutionary thinking (though often times critical thinking can and does lead to revolutionary thoughts).

Teaching communication theory from a more critical perspective does not eliminate the other three educational goals that Sprague cites. To truly critique, to truly offer an informed position on a body of knowledge or on a theoretical perspective, it is necessary to attempt to understand that perspective in its original form. Therefore, it is still necessary to instruct students about the original theory. Critique without knowledge is polemic. Providing a more critical perspective to the teaching of communication theory also enhances the remaining two goals. Since critique requires comprehension of material, as well as synthesis and evaluation (Bloom, 1956), students in courses where communication theory is taught from a critical perspective are required to develop and employ more complex intellectual skills.

These are important reasons for the teaching of communication theory from a more critical perspective. We also need to teach communication theory from a more critical perspective because of what we are learning about how theories operate (not only in communication, but in all the disciplines) and how language operates to not only uncover and transmit knowledge, but to produce and reproduce knowledge. Without a critical perspective, such production and reproduction of knowledge occurs without the questioning to which it should be subjected.

Along with many other contemporary theorists of language and culture, Michel Foucault has drawn attention to the manner in which what we traditionally perceive of as "knowledge," and, more specifically, what we consider within

our own disciplines to be coherent and cohesive theories, are not natural occurrences. The connections that we take for granted between the different elements of a seemingly cohesive theory are connections that have been made by us, not necessarily connections that simply exist a priori our discovery of them.

In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972), Foucault addresses this issue by focusing on his own discipline, history. The focus is on what appears to be an opposition between what we know as history (the study of long-term continuative themes) and the history of ideas, which seems fixed on the discontinuities in the study of ideas. This distinction becomes less apparent when one notices that both trends are focused on the documents of history, the "texts" of history. These texts are what we are studying, and the battle is really over determining the appropriate way to choose, select, modify, study and define a "text." For Foucault, the study of history (or the study of any discipline) is not simply discovering any immutable relations between histories, or within a specific history. The study of history and other disciplines is the study of how and why these connections are made, and why these connections have been given the appearance of immutability (p. 15).

Foucault challenges all academics to question, at least, and dissolve, if possible, the standard connections between ideas and events that we have taken for granted, ideas such as linearity, influence, intention, causality, and the discrete and autonomous individual. Once we have dissolved, or "held in suspense," these standard connections, we are then free to form new connections, to examine the conditions which lead to the formation and reproduction of these standard connections, and to explore the ramifications of these "taken-for-granted" connections on how we have studied and taught our own disciplines.

We are asked, in effect, to look at much of what we have looked at before, but without the theoretical perspectives that gave meaning to these occurrences and phenomenon. We are

asked to look anew at numerous occurrences of human behavior without the automatic assumptions of causality, intention or influence (pp. 28-29). It may well be that we find that many of these concepts remain important in our study, but we will then have created these connections through study, rather than beginning our study with these connections.

Shifting our study from using these automatic assumptions to questioning connections and searching for connections is more than just changing what we take for granted. It is also a process of changing what we are looking for. The purpose of study would not be simply the discovery of connections, but would also be to discover the rules by which these connections ("discursive formations") are and have been made, what Foucault calls the "rules of formation" (p. 38). And this study would be focused on language, on discourse, for it is in our discourse that we create these connections. As Foucault notes time and time again, these connections are not immutable, are not part of a Platonic world in which ideal forms are awaiting our discovery. These connections are the result of practices and procedures, the "rules of formation," that each discipline employs, that academic practices in technological and scientific cultures live by, and that, by and large, remain unquestioned.

What this means to the study and teaching of communication theory is at once both basic and far-reaching. As noted above, much of what we do in teaching communication theory is based on the acceptance and transmission of many of these automatic assumptions. At the root of many of the theories of contemporary communication lie such assumptions as linearity, rationality, causality, influence, and the autonomous subject. So at least at the basic level we can see that what this approach would require is a refocusing of our pedagogical efforts: A shift in emphasis from the transmission of received knowledge to a study of how this material came to be received knowledge; a shift in emphasis from the study of

the application of these theories to a study of reasons why these theories were developed and employed in specific circumstances; and a shift in emphasis from knowledge, comprehension, and application, to analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Beyond these basic changes would be a new focus on communication theory. A shift from studying communication as a reflection of what we know and how we can manipulate this knowledge, to studying communication primarily as a constitutive element in the construction of knowledge, as a means by which we come to know how we know, rather than what we know.

These shifts in emphasis have been called for by others in the field of communication. Karl Erik Rosengren (1989), in discussing whether or not communication theory can accurately be described as encompassing a paradigm (a set of rules about procedures, practices and accepted methodologies) argues for the need to question those elements of paradigmatic thought that are most assumed, or most taken-for-granted. Rosengren goes further, and claims that the very act of questioning, or criticism, of these paradigmatic assumptions is a positive and even necessary step for academic growth (pp. 25-26).

Stuart Hall (1989) has also called for a rethinking of the manner in which communication theory is practiced (and therefore taught). Hall has offered a critique of what he describes as the "dominant paradigm" of communication. Along with this critique, Hall calls for a transition to a "critical paradigm," acknowledging that this "paradigm" is only a loose confederation of approaches, a "looseness" of which he approves. This transition would involve, among other elements, a shift from the isolated, behavioristic, experimental approach to the study of human communication, to a context-laden and context-bound theory of human communication:

> . . . an understanding of each element's cultural aspect, its semiotic or discursive character; an awareness that the media function in and through the domain of meaning. There is no "message" that is already there in reality, that reality possesses exclusively and unproblematically, that language and other media systems. as transcriptive relay systems, can simply transpose into the blank minds and consciousness of their receivers. Meaning is polysemic in its intrinsic nature; it remains inextricably context-bound (p. 47).

What Hall is calling for, in other words, is what Foucault called for earlier: An understanding of the constitutive function of discourse to produce and reproduce what we call knowledge. The elements of the dominant paradigm that Hall critiques are elements that have remained largely unquestioned, and have, through the discourse of the communication discipline, become received knowledge, become taken-for-granteds, become the paradigmatic rules that, according to Hall, both guide the study of communication phenomenon and, to a large extent, dictate the results of that study. As Hall phrases it: ". . . I believe that paradigms think people as much as people think paradigms" (p. 40). Hall wants, therefore, a communication theory that assumes little and questions much, that focuses not on assumed theory and the teaching of that theory as a practice of "transcriptive relay systems," but on the critical assessment of communicative practices.

What does this shift in emphasis, this move to a critical perspective, mean for the classroom instruction of communication theory? As noted above, the traditional model of communication theory has hewed closely to what Hall and others have described as the dominant paradigm, heavy on communication as a social science, heavy on theory as the accumulated knowledge of the past, heavy on theory as the necessary first steps for the study of the future.

First, a shift to a more critical approach does not mean the dismissal and denial of the past. nor of the view of communication as a social science. It will involve a new understanding of the term "social" science, a term more in line with the understanding of what Giddens (1989) means by a "social" science. A shift to a more critical approach will require, first and foremost, exactly what Hawes asked for in 1977: A solid understanding of what is to be critiqued. Without a knowledge of the subject matter under analysis, the analysis is worthless. Thus, in the classroom, students will still need to become familiar with the basic principles of traditional theories of communication.

Secondly, such a shift does not mean that the communication theory course become nothing more than a trashing ground for the dominant paradigm. Critique is not synonymous with disparagement; critique is better understood as reasoned skepticism, even something more akin to Wayne Booth's (1974) "rhetoric of assent" (p. 40). A critical approach is an approach that questions traditional assumptions, and those questions may well provide answers that reinforce the assumptions. But they will then be answers after analysis, not assumptions before the search.

Third, such a shift will have a practical impact on the manner of instruction in courses on communication theory, especially those courses which function as the basic course in communication and enroll large numbers of students in lecture-hall formats (Trank, 1990, p. 411). A critical approach to communication theory simply cannot take place in a lecture hall, a format designed for the transmission of received knowledge, not the questioning of such knowledge (Allen, Wilmington and Sprague, 1991, p. 266). If administrative and budgetary considerations require such a format, then the use of graduate or undergraduate teaching assistants and/or discussion leaders will be essential.

More specifically, a shift to a critical approach to communication theory can be employed in a traditional classroom

setting (25-35 students), and can even take place utilizing existing texts designed for the introductory communication theory course as it currently exists. The major change will be a move from a classroom designed around just the understanding and application of communication theories, to a classroom centered on five elements: 1) discovering the assumptions supporting a communication theory; 2) discovering the connection between this theory of communication and a theory of human knowledge; 3) critically analyzing the assumptions which support the theory and the connection between the communication theory and the theory of knowledge; 4) attempting to understand the reasons why this theory and its supporting assumptions have become received knowledge; 5) understanding the implications of this theory of communication as it effects theories of human development, thought and behavior.

This emphasis may require that we cover fewer theories in our introductory course, but since the emphasis will now be on critique rather than simple comprehension, the number of theories covered will be less important than the method used to teach critical analysis. Additionally, this approach will force us to be more selective in deciding which theories are most appropriate and most necessary for the purposes of our students, and that will depend on the mission and goals of our own departments and our own teaching philosophies.

The shift can be as simple as an addition to the questions that we ask our students to ask about communication theory and that we help them learn how to answer. Infante, Rancer, and Womack (1993), for example, ask these four questions: What are theories?; Why do scientists create and modify them?; How may theories be compared?; and How may theories be evaluated? I would add the following questions to this list, and would devote at least equal time in the classroom to helping students learn how to answer them:

1. What assumptions support each theory or group of theories?
2. What does each theory have to say about the following:
   a. The nature of knowledge
   b. The relationship between language and knowledge
3. If we utilize these theories to study human behavior, what must we assume about human behavior?
4. If we assume these things. how will that affect the results of our study?
5. If we assume these things, what will our studies say about human beings?
6. If we utilize these theories based on these assumptions, to what use will or might our results be put?

A brief example might make this shift in emphasis a bit more clear. Griffen (pp. 344-353) provides a concise discussion of George Gerbner's Cultivation Theory. This theory, as a reminder, claims a positive causal relationship between the amount of television viewing and perception of a violent world. Griffen presents the basic terminology of this theoretical perspective, a summary of the research findings, and a short critique of both the methodology and the findings: In short, how the study was done, what the results were, and questions for further study; a familiar model from many of our academic journals.

Griffen offers a convenient approach to treating communication theory from a more critical perspective. In essence, shifting the study of communication theory from a perspective focused upon comprehension and application of a theory to a perspective focused upon comprehension and *questioning* of a theory is as simple as shifting the emphasis from a study of

the findings (still needed) to a study of the methodology and assumptions supporting the entire theory. Five additional questions to be considered when studying communication theory were listed above. To begin to answer them in brief should provide a better picture of what the study of communication theory would look like following a more critical perspective.

What assumption(s) support this theory? Griffen provides us with a bit of this answer. Cultivation theory is designed to offer an "objective measure" of the level of TV violence (p. 345); the pervasive nature of television has made the entire society into "consumers" of this material (p. 346); people are either "light" or "heavy" users of television (p. 346); and people are, in essence, captives of television, unable to exercise much choice or critical understanding of television (p. 351). The critical student of communication theory would need to spend more time studying these assumptions, which would then lead to the other additional questions asked of these theories.

What does each theory have to say about the nature of knowledge and the relationship between language and knowledge? By better understanding (and questioning) the basic assumptions of the theory, students of communication theory would be in a better position to consider the role that language plays in the transmission and/or creation of knowledge. Students should be able to see that Gerbner's theory can be understood both as a case of language creating reality (a perception of fear) or as reflecting reality (the concept of resonance).

Understanding the basic assumptions of Gerbner's theory and methodology can also help students answer the question about the particular theoretical perspective and its assumptions about human behavior. Gerbner seems to be claiming that human behavior is primarily stimulus-response: Television shows violence; people watch television; people believe the world is a violent place and act accordingly. While this

may be a plausible explanation for human behavior, students of communication theory should at least be encouraged to understand this assumption and realize that this assumption is a necessary one if this theory is to be valid.

Finally, better understanding the assumptions of the particular theoretical perspective (along with, of course, the methodology and findings) would allow students to go beyond comprehension and application to evaluation, and would allow them to attempt to answer the question about the possible uses (and misuses) of theory. Gerbner's model is very much a part of the academic and popular debate about television, violence, and possible government control of television content. In understanding not only what Gerbner's study has found, but also the manner in which the study was accomplished and the assumptions which made the study possible, students will be in a better position to critically evaluate the use of these findings.

This last element of this shift in the study of communication theory is the most essential. In a sense, this adds a layer of critical reflection in between comprehension and application. Students do more than learn and apply; they now learn, critique, and then consider if the theory is still viable and the application is still worthwhile. This layer of critical reflection is why a shift in the study of communication theory is just a shift, not a complete change in direction. This shift deepens our knowledge, and asks of both teacher and student a more careful consideration of the material being studied.

I believe that this shift offers a chance to strengthen the introductory course in communication theory. Asking and attempting to answer such questions as those listed above will require higher-level intellectual ability on the part of our students. Not only will students be required to comprehend and apply these theories, they will be required to critically analyze these theories, to consider all the elements of theoretical thought that passes unquestioned.

Certainly, instructors employing the texts discussed above and focusing on introducing students to a variety of theories can also teach students to critique, but the emphasis placed on the transmission of knowledge without the criticism of such knowledge makes that job more difficult. The standard texts focus on standard theories: their construction, principles and applications. Teaching from these texts predisposes us to focus on the same elements. As Kenneth Burke (1973) has reminded us: Form influences function. We need, as teachers of communication theory, to make a conscious effort to go beyond teaching just comprehension. To teach critique, to require students to develop their full intellectual capabilities, is what an introductory communication theory course can and should accomplish.

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Instructional Resource Innovations for the Introductory Communication Course

EDITOR'S FORWARD

The following four articles represent the proceedings of an SCA Seminar held at the New Orleans convention: "Instructional Resource Innovations for the Introductory Communication Course." These monographs detail four multi-media resource areas that introductory communication course directors can consider: Storytelling — the student-as-medium (Pamela Cooper); Visualization — the student-as-medium (Joe Ayres and Debbie M. Ayres); Self-confrontation — applications involving the use of videotape with public speaking instruction (Craig Newburger, Linda Brannon, and Arlie Daniel); and Computer-Mediated-Communication (Gerald M. Santoro and Gerald M. Phillips).

Stories as Instructional Strategy: Teaching in Another Culture

Pamela Cooper

INTRODUCTION

Let me begin with a story. It all began in September 1992. I had just walked into a classroom at the Chinese University of Hong Kong to begin my first international teaching experience. Perhaps more than any other time since I'd moved to Hong Kong, I knew I was no longer in Illinois! A sea of Chinese faces watched me walk into the classroom. I was unsure about their English proficiency, and I spoke enough Mandarin to fill a thimble, and even less Cantonese. Here I was, the teacher of the basic oral communication course, "Effective Oral Communication." There they were, staring at me. My heart sank. I asked myself, and meant it with all my being, "What am I doing here?" Everything I'd learned about teaching in the past 25 years seemed useless. I was indeed a stranger in a strange land. My environment, my academic discipline, my sense of self were all strangers to me.

Shabatay's (1991) description of the stranger came to mind:

> A member of a group lives at ease with his habits, with the ways of his group. But the stranger must be always on the alert; he must struggle to learn the different ways; the idioms of the language, the idioms of emotion, the meaning of unspoken glances. He has to learn the history, possibly the language, certainly the customs and traditions of his

> adopted community. His antennae are always out: Who may expel me? Who may be threatened by me? Who may be suspicious of my loyalty? Did I commit a faux pas? Whom did I insult? The stranger must learn how to blend, to belong, to be beyond mistrust. He must live through the uncomfortableness of awkwardness, of ignorance, of his "greenhornness." He must gain acceptance, and then he must live with the tension of his two cultures: new and old.
> (p. 140)

After a disastrous first class period, I returned to my office, closed the door, sat down, and asked myself, "How can I 'connect' with these students?" After some contemplation I decided that the answer existed in "story," and so I began to develop my basic oral communication course around the instructional strategy of "story."

STORY AS INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY

Why "story"? As my daughter Jamie says, "Everything you tell is a story." If that is true (and I believe it is), storytelling becomes a vehicle for discovering who we are, for making sense of our world, for enhancing our learning/teaching, and for plain old fun!

In his book *Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value and Action*, Fisher (1989) suggests that human beings are inherently storytellers. Humans experience and understand life as "a series of ongoing narratives, as conflicts, characters, beginnings, middles, and ends" (p. 24). Thus, all forms of communication can be seen fundamentally as stories — symbolic interpretations of aspects of the world occurring in time and shaped by history, culture, and character.

I have written elsewhere on the importance of story in education and its value as an instructional strategy (Cooper,

1988, 1989; Cooper and Collins, 1992). Suffice it to say here that students should be encouraged to use stories to "make sense," to enhance their learning. As Schoafsma (1989) indicates:

> We who teach often dismiss stories as a primitive form, a form for children something students need to move "beyond" for the learning they will have to do in schools. However, stories, grounded as they are in students' lives and concerns, are one important means students have for making sense of their worlds, as important tool for learning . (p. 89)

As students share their concerns, desires, fears, accomplishments and dreams through their stories, they become members of what Bruner (1986) calls a "culture creating community." According to Bruner, "It is not just that the child must make his knowledge his own, but that he must make it his own in a community of those who share his sense of belonging to a culture" (p. 120).

Much schooling today is what Gee (1986) refers to as essay-text literacy: Essay-text literacy . . . is connected with the forms of consciousness and the interests of the powerful in our society" (p. 742). Essay-text literacy is efficient, neatly packaged knowledge. It allows little room for knowledge gained from personal experience. For true learning, narrative knowledge is essential. Narrative knowledge is experiential and cultural knowing. It is the best means available for students to organize their experience for themselves.

Story seemed an appropriate teaching strategy to me for all the above reasons. In addition, teaching effectively in another culture demands some idea about that culture. Stories are vehicles of cultural transmission. If I am to teach effectively, I need to understand my students. What better way to reach understanding than through story?

Finally, Chinese students have, for the most part, been taught in very structured ways — in the "essay-text" mode. Lai (1993), in her report of TEFL classroom practice in China, outlines the following:

TEFL Classroom Practice

Emphasizing	Neglecting
1. knowledge	English language use
2. explanation	performance
3. rote learning	comprehension
4. written work	oral work
5. text	situation
6. uniformity	individuality
7. reading in chorus	group work
8. minority	majority
9. criticism	praise
10. grades for promotion	quality for life
11. receptive skills	production skills

Chinese students have little practice in oral communication. The teacher talks; the students listen. The teacher is highly respected and not to be questioned. Storytelling prompts questions and conversation; it provides a catalyst for communication by beginning the communication event with what one knows best — one's own story.

USES OF STORY

On the first day of class I assign the Business Card Activity. I explain that one of the things I was most amazed about in Hong Kong was the prevalence of cards — every person, couple, business had a card. I explain that these cards communicate about the owner — the color, shape, print style, logo. And we perceive certain characteristics about this person based on her/his card. I assign students the task of creating their "business card" to bring to class the next class period. In a sense, this assignment forces students to begin to tell their own story. I divide the students into pairs or small groups to share their cards and answer any questions their classmates might have. Each student then presents her/his card to the class. This assignment leads into a discussion of general communication principles dealing with meaning, language, perception, self-concept, and self-disclosure. I also make reference to this assignment later in the term as students are thinking about speech topics. I suggest they begin with their own interests and give examples of interests discussed during this assignment.

The next assignment — The Proverb — asks students to bring a Chinese proverb to class, explain its meaning, the cultural value it expresses, what the proverb means to them (why they chose it), and what effect the value expressed might have when communicating with a person from a different culture. Most Chinese proverbs are derived from a story. Students are also asked to share (1) the story behind the proverb or (2) the story of how/where they first heard the proverb. This assignment begins the discussion of intercultural communication.

A second intercultural communication assignment is The Personal Anecdote. Each anecdote begins with the same sentence: I am a (put in current age, nationality, and sex), and a (choose relevant adjectives such as hilarious, frightening, con-

fusing, infuriating, heartwarming) cross cultural incident that happened to me occurred in (place and date). Students then describe in detail the incident. Each student brings her/his story, shares it first in a small group and then to the class as a whole. Discussion focuses on what the anecdote tells us about the cultures involved and about ourselves, given our response to the situation described in the anecdote. Finally, discussion focuses on the role of communication in the misperceptions which occur.

Parenthetically, you have no doubt noticed that many of the assignments are discussed first in pairs or small groups rather than individually in front of the class. Because students are speaking in their second language, they feel more comfortable speaking in pairs or a small group prior to speaking in front of all their classmates.

Small group instruction begins with a story — a murder mystery. A murder has been committed which the students must solve. I provide the clues (one to each student) — the story, if you will. The class is given 15 minutes to determine: the murderer, weapon, time and location of the murder, and motive. The only rule is all clues must be given orally. Following this exercise, we discuss the principles of small group communication — size, need for every member to contribute and to contribute in a manner conducive to solving the problem, the importance of fact vs. inference, communication networks, norms, roles, leadership, problem-solving strategies, etc.

Next, each student brings to class a problem she/he needs solved. The problem must deal with the physical world, not their emotional world. For example, the problem might be that they oversleep everyday because they always turn off their alarm clock in their sleep. In small groups, each student tells her/his problem (in essence, a story). The group chooses which problem they want to solve and creates an invention to solve it. The group shares their solution with the class. Group members evaluate their own and their classmates' communi-

cation within the group. I evaluate their small group presentation.

Public speaking instruction begins with students writing a story in cinquain form. Poems are read aloud — first in pairs or small groups, then to the class as a shoe. I then point out that they have gone through the steps of speech preparation — topic selection, organization, use of language, relating the topic to self, audience analysis, types of proof, etc. I refer back to this exercise as I discuss speech preparation for the next several days. I also require that students include a personal story in their speeches.

The last unit of the course is storytelling. I begin the unit with the exercise "Real Life Folklore". I want students to understand the role of folktale in their present day lives. I explain that the "folk" are all of us — that folklore exists when people share an identity. Thus, families, classrooms, peers, and organizations such as universities have folklore. Students are then asked to share the folklore of the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

The next assignment, "Inviting Groups to Tell a Story," takes students through the process of telling a story. I begin with Chinese fables. I divide the class into groups of four and give each member of each group a copy of a Chinese fable. Each group receives a different fable. Each group member reads the fable silently. The groups discuss members' initial reactions to the fable. Groups then read the fable round robin style and answer the question: What did you learn about the story when you heard it read aloud? Groups then read the story a second time, again in round robin style and then discuss: If you were a picture book artist, which moments in the story would you choose to illustrate? Describe your illustrations in vivid detail. Students are then instructed to turn the text face down and in round robin style, tell the story. Groups then look at the text again and discuss: What was left out in the telling? What additions did you make that "bring the story to life"? How is the story growing in the oral tradition? The

text is again turned face down, group members stand, and again tell the story in round robin style. Then I tell students: Now, tell the fable to the wall. Literally. Find a space along the wall, face the wall, and tell the fable. After telling to the wall, students recombine into new groups of four. Each student then tells the fable her/his group learned to the other group members. Ideally each group member of the recombined groups has a different fable to tell.

The final assignment in this unit is for students to choose a folktale and tell it to the class. They are encouraged to use puppets, props, music, felt board, or other storytelling techniques.

In addition to these assignments centered around the teaching strategy of story, much of my own classroom communication utilized stories — my own experiences, short fables to introduce concepts, recent news articles, etc.

CONCLUSION

My own story of teaching basic oral communication in a culture different from my own is one of frustration and fascination. It is never, however, a boring story. Let me end with a Chinese story — one that speaks to my experience of teaching at the Chinese University of Hong Kong:

MAY BE

(huo)

A man's horse ran away. "What misfortune," said his friends.

"Maybe," said the man.

A few days later the horse returned with another, even stronger horse. "What a blessing," exclaimed the friends.

"Maybe," replied the man.

The next day his son tried to ride the wild horse but fell off and broke his leg. "What a disaster," cried the friends.

"Maybe," answered the man.

A week later all the young men except the son with the broken leg were taken away to fight in a brutal war. "How wonderfully everything has turned out," marveled the friends.

"Maybe," said the man.

Maybe story isn't the best instructional strategy to use, but maybe it is. Only time will tell !

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The Role of Performance Visualization in the Basic Public Speaking Course: Current Applications and Future Possibilities*

Joe Ayres
Debbie M. Ayres

The first part of this essay considers performance visualization's ability to reduce speech anxiety and enhance performance. The second portion of the essay considers other possible uses of visualization in public speaking classes.

CURRENT APPLICATIONS

Nature of Performance Visualization

Performance visualization involves mental modeling of speeches. As presented by Ayres and Hopf (1993), performance visualization entails watching a videotape of a proficient speaker, making a mental movie of that speaker which is as detailed and vivid as the videotape itself, and eventually replacing the speaker on the tape with a vivid image of yourself as the speaker. Ayres and Hopf (1992) offer evidence that performance visualization of this nature reduces speech anxiety and enhances speech performance.

*Appreciation is extended to Frances Ayres for her help in preparing this manuscript.

These data contrast with their earlier data on visualization (Ayres & Hopf, 1985). In that data, Ayres and Hopf found that visualization reduced speech anxiety but did not enhance performance. Of course, performance visualization and visualization, as developed by these authors, are very different. Visualization involves listening to a script that describes an upcoming speech in positive terms, but does not involve viewing a speech nor seeing oneself as the eventual performer of that speech. Given the clear superiority of performance visualization, we will concern ourselves exclusively with its application in reducing public speaking anxiety.

Who Should Use Performance Visualization

Current evidence suggests that performance visualization enhances performance and reduces speech anxiety for most people who are exposed to it (Ayres, Hopf, & Ayres, in press). However, these data also suggest the procedure is most effective for people who are vivid imagers. A considerable amount of literature suggests there are substantial differences in individual's abilities to visualize. Some people report very minimal imaging ability and others report extremely vivid imaging ability (Betts, 1909). Accordingly, imagery based interventions tend to be more effective for vivid imagers than for less vivid imagers (Ayres, Hopf, & Ayres, in press). The implication of these data is that people exposed to performance visualization ought to be screened for imagery vividness. There is an excellent instrument for this purpose (Sheehan, 1967). The instrument contains 35 items and has been found to be quite reliable. Sheehan developed this instrument by selecting items from Betts' (1909) original 108 item instrument. Recent factor analytic work (Neumann, 1991) confirmed the worth of Sheehan's modifications.

People who score high on Sheehan's instrument are likely to benefit the most from performance visualization. Those who score low on imagery might profit more from procedures

that rely less on imagining and more on rational thinking, such as cognitive restructuring (Meichenbaum, Gilmore, & Fedoravicius, 1971).

FUTURE APPLICATIONS

Screening

While current data clearly indicate people to be exposed to performance visualization ought to be screened for imaging ability, it appears that another dimension of imaging ability ought to be involved in the screening process — control. It is well established that people differ in their ability to control the images they generate (Gordon, 1949). For instance, some people are able to imagine an old car with little difficulty. In turn, some people can quite readily see an elephant sitting on the car when asked to do so. On the other hand, some people are able to vividly imagine something but are unable to control the nature of the image once it is brought to mind. Asking a person who can generate vivid images but who is unable to control the nature of the images he or she generates may have disastrous consequences. The person may vividly envision a terrible speech and thus increase, rather than decrease, his or her speech anxiety. Until relevant data are available, we recommend screening people for their ability to control images as well as for their ability to generate vivid images. A reliable and valid instrument is available for this purpose (Gordon, 1949). Gordon's instrument contains 12 items and takes very little time to administer. We feel that people who report little ability to control images should not be exposed to performance visualization (or any other imagery based approach such as flooding [Marshall, Gauthier, & Gordon, 1979] or systematic desensitization [Wolpe, 1958]).

Improving Performance Visualization

Current research (Ayres & Hopf, 1992) has examined how well performance visualization works when an outstanding speaker (in this case Barbara Jordon) is used as a model. It seems likely that models particularly suited to a particular student's difficulty would prove to be even more effective. The situation seems analogous to the use of performance visualization in athletics. Athletes who use performance visualization do not use general models (Garfield, 1984). They focus on very specific aspects of performance. A tennis player having trouble with his or her backhand does not imagine another player's entire game, but focuses instead specifically on the player's backhand. Similarly, speakers who have trouble with vocal variety probably ought to be exposed to a speaker whose vocal variety is excellent and asked to focus on that aspect of the speaker's delivery.

Other types of models ought to be considered. Several students commented to us that they had trouble relating to Barbara Jordon (not that they didn't think she was an excellent speaker but that they could not envision themselves in her place). It may well be that excellent student speeches would serve better in classroom speaking situations than "great speeches."

Another improvement would be to build in a cue associate with visualization. In most circumstances, one cannot perform a visualization exercise in the minute or two immediately prior to delivering a speech. Anecdotal evidence suggests that if one uses a cue (such as making a fist) at the start of each visualization session, the cue will become associated with the feelings of relaxation developed during the visualization exercise. If one develops this associative pattern, using the cue just prior to speaking can help one feel positive about the pending speech. This effect has been well established by behavioral scientists but has not been documented vis a vis

visualization. People who have tried this with visualization report that it is quite effective however.

It is undoubtedly stretching things considerably but modern technology offers an intriguing potential extension of visualization. We refer to the emergence of virtual reality devices. Current applications suggest that virtual reality projections are indistinguishable from real sensory input (Biocca, 1992). If so, anxious (as well as non-anxious) speakers may benefit from this technology. If we understand the technology correctly, the person him or herself could be the speaker projected via the virtual reality device. That is, the speaker could see him or herself delivering a speech. The speech could be perfected by the use of editing techniques. In effect, then, the person can be exposed to the perfect model — him or herself. At present, these applications have not been developed but the potential of these devices is tantalizing, albeit prohibitively expensive at this date.

I (JA) was asked the other day what I felt was the major source of speech anxiety. I was surprised to find myself saying "Lack of preparation." Upon reflection, I recalled that almost every speech anxious student I had ever encountered told me that he or she spent considerable time and energy preparing his or her speech. At the same time, the performances I have observed by speech anxious people seem to reflect a lack of preparation. When you ask speech anxious people questions about material they read in preparing a speech, their answers are often vague and unresponsive. So what's going on, are all these students lying? I doubt it. I think they are working very hard at preparing their speeches, but anxiety is interfering with their preparation activities. They are thinking about the dreaded speech and not about the articles they are reading. Related research indicates that people have limited cognitive capacity and seem able to focus on but one issue at a time (Booth-Butterfield, Cooke, Andrighetti, Casteel, Lang, Pearson, & Rodriquez, 1994). If this speculation is correct, we

ought to be helping people cope with their speech anxiety during the preparation phase of their speeches.

Performance visualization seems unlikely to be very helpful in this situation. We would suggest instead training people to use relaxation exercises like those employed in systematic desensitization (Wolpe, 1958). A tape developed by James C. McCroskey for this purpose is available from the Speech Communication Association. We would approach this problem by training students to relax and advising them to employ these relaxation exercises whenever they start feeling anxious about an upcoming speech — especially when they are trying to research the speech. We do not know if this particular approach will be helpful, but it appears we do need to develop and validate procedures that will help people cope with speech anxiety during the preparation phase of developing their speeches. We urge research into this aspect of speech anxiety.

General Applications

Performance visualization was developed by reference to work in athletics and business (Garfield, 1984). The people in these contexts were not anxious. They simply wanted to perform better. It seems quite likely that non-speech anxious students can profit from performance visualization as much or more than speech anxious people. We have had numerous non-speech anxious people tell us that they use visualization as a normal part of speech preparation. These students report vividly imagining themselves delivering the speech and envisioning the speech in a variety of ways, finally settling on the most satisfying. When they envision the speech in this way, they report being particularly attentive to trouble spots. These trouble spots indicate sections of the speech that require more work. Performance visualization may help non-speech anxious people perfect their imaging ability. As with

speech anxious people, we would suggest screening non-speech anxious people for imaging and control abilities.

SUMMARY

Performance visualization seems to be a tool that can be used to help people cope with speech anxiety. We suggest people be screened for their imaging ability since vivid imagers receive more benefit than less vivid imagers from performance visualization.

We went beyond the available evidence to suggest that people should also be screened for their ability to control images before exposing them to performance visualization. It seems logical to infer that vivid imagers who cannot control the nature of the images they conjure up may be harmed more than helped by performance visualization.

We also speculated that performance visualization could be more effective if models closer to the student's domain are employed. Targeting specific behaviors rather than exposing people to an entire speech might enhance the effectiveness of performance visualization.

We also pointed out that inadequate preparation was an important but largely undocumented source of speech anxiety. We doubt that performance visualization can be of use in this regard. Interestingly, no interventions we are aware of target the preparation phase of speech making. We suggested relaxation training as one possible intervention.

We also suggested that performance visualization may be useful to non-speech anxious people. This suggestion was based on anecdotal evidence that non-speech anxious people have shared with us. Performance visualization may help these people perfect their visualizing ability.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

In this section of the essay, we move from facts to speculation. At present, visualization plays a minor role in our basic public speaking course. We think there is reason to believe it ought to play an expanded role. Before we consider the role visualization can play in the basic public speaking course, let's consider its present role. Aside from reducing speech anxiety, visualization is of little import in public speaking courses at present. To be sure, we point out that speakers should use visual aids and vivid words. These suggestions invariably presume that words carry the primary message and that the right words will evoke relevant images or that a timely visual aid can be used to enhance a primarily verbal message. This approach makes a tacit but obvious assumption about the relationship between sequential linear information (i.e., verbal) and simultaneous, non-linear (i.e., non-verbal) information. Public speaking texts presume verbal information is the primary way to engage audiences, with non-verbal information relegated to a secondary, supportive role.

This "verbal first" mentality is not a universally accepted explanation for the way people process information (Paivio, 1971 and Paivio, 1986). In fact, it is generally agreed that very young children use a "non-verbal first" approach (Piaget, 1952, 1962, 1981; Vygotsky, 1962). However, these authors go on to argue that people move from "non-verbal first" to "verbal first" over time. Our field's adoption of Piaget and Vygotsky's views, as well as our tradition of western rationality, probably explains why basic public speaking courses place a primary emphasis on verbal messages.

However, Paivio (1986) offers a compelling contrary dual-coding explanation of how we process sequential (verbal) and simultaneous (nonverbal) information. He feels that information from both spheres is received, stored, and recalled differently. Some non-verbal cues may elicit verbal elements,

some verbal cues may elicit certain non-verbal elements, and of course, some information will be primarily verbal and some primarily non-verbal.

If Paivio is correct, and we believe his position makes considerable sense, we ought to seriously reconsider the way we view information processing in basic public speaking courses (and other spheres as well). It would seem that some audiences (small children) and some occasions (eulogies?) and some topics (music?) may be well suited to presentations organized around nonverbal rather than verbal structures. We are reminded of a joke we recently heard about a father and son riding along with the radio tuned to a rock station. The father asked his son what the song was about. The son replied that he did not know because he hadn't seen it on MTV yet! Anyone who watches MTV knows the producers use a "non-verbal first" approach. We suspect "non-verbal first" speeches will follow similar structural transformations.

An emphasis on non-verbal, simultaneous processing has been commonplace in far-eastern cultures for centuries (Samuels & Samuels, 1975). Aspects of these cultures almost seem to reverse our "verbal first" to a "non-verbal first" stance. These cultures stress meditation to decommission rational thought in order to reach a higher plane of existence (Samuels & Samuels, 1975). We are not arguing here for the superiority of one system over the other. We point out this pattern as an instance of cultural difference. Speakers who encounter audiences with this frame of reference will not fare well unless they understand and adapt to the "non-verbal first" nature of people with these cultural backgrounds.

We doubt this essay will do much to alter our approach to basic public speaking courses. We do think it raises some issues that need to be explored. If the rising emphasis on intercultural diversity in basic public speaking texts is a sign of things to come, it may signal a willingness to reconsider our almost universal acceptance of verbal language as the fundamental means by which people process information.

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Self-confrontation and Public Speaking Apprehension: To Videotape or Not To Videotape Student Speakers?

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The public speaking orientation for introductory communication course (ICC) instruction is maintaining a position of dominance among U.S. universities and colleges (Gibson, Hanna & Lechty, 1990). Gibson et al. indicated that 56% of 423 universities surveyed chose the public speaking option. The "hybrid" orientation to basic course instruction (a combination of orientations [e.g., public speaking, interpersonal, communication theory, etc.]) was the choice of only 25% of the schools surveyed (a 9% decrease over the last five years that data were collected) (p. 240). The emphasis on public speaking instruction "challenges the classroom instructor to discover and implement strategies that minimize anxiety associated with in-class public speaking performances" (Beatty, 1988, p. 208; see also, Newburger & Hemphill, 1992).

This study examines whether the use of self-confrontation (self-viewing of videotaped speeches) as an instructional intervention in introductory public speaking classes will result in a reduction of subjects' public speaking apprehension levels. Gibson et al. (1990) indicated that 41% of the schools they surveyed used videotape in some capacity in ICC classrooms. Considering the tangible presence of videotape in ICC classrooms, it seems useful to examine the potential impact that self-confrontation (self-viewing of videotaped speeches as

post-performance feedback) might have as an instructional intervention intended to reduce student public speaking apprehension.

"For most people, giving a speech is a novel experience, not something they do every day" (McCroskey, 1984, p. 25). The experience of presenting a speech *to be graded* would seemingly intensify the exceptional nature of the already novel public speaking communication event (Newburger & Hemphill, 1992). Similarly, people probably regard being videotaped as a novel experience. Introducing this variable into the "speaking for grades" environment certainly provides speakers with immediate and compelling feedback concerning their performances, but what impact might self-confrontation have on their public speaking apprehension levels?

Previous research has produced mixed results with self-confrontation having been found to be both *positively* and *negatively* reinforcing (Lake & Adams, 1984; Gelso, 1974; Roberts, 1972; Dieker, Crane, & Brown, 1971; and McCroskey & Lashbrook, 1970). Lake & Adams (1984) found, for example, that public speaking students involved with having their speech presentations videotaped "experienced highly similar levels of anxiety, exhibitionism, and reticence as they did when they spoke without the presence of the VTR in the classroom [with differences always involving increased anxiety after the students were videotaped]" (p. 335). Data acquired from students who completed an undergraduate public speaking course [employing self-confrontation] currently being offered at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs ["Speech and Thought Curriculum"] indicated, however, a significant reduction in communication apprehension in all contexts measured by the PRCA (public speaking, conversation, meeting, group) (Morreale, 1992). The course employs multiple instruments and methods to assess student progress in lecture, recitation, and in an Individualized Assistance Laboratory (IAL) (Shockley-Zalaback & Hulbert-Johnson, 1994, p.30). Students give five in-class presentations

and view a videotape of each performance with a graduate assistant in the IAL within two weeks after each presentation (Shockley-Zalaback & Hulbert-Johnson, 1994).

Certainly, among the 41% of the schools surveyed that reported using videotape in some capacity in ICC classrooms (Gibson et al., 1990) a number of idiosyncratic applications must exist. A relevant question emerges: "what impact does each distinct manipulation of VTR (e.g., private out-of-class viewings of speaking performances [with a faculty member, graduate assistant, peer, or viewed alone] or in-class viewings [with feedback given by a faculty member or graduate assistant]) have on speaker apprehension levels?" Many campuses may not have graduate assistants or resources for individualized assistance labs, etc. Such campuses may be limited to in-class viewings of speech presentations with instructors providing feedback. This methodology requires no additional facilities, additional personnel, or out-of-class demands on instructors' time. This study examines the impact of employing self-confrontation via the instructor guided in-class viewing option.

Hypothesis: Subjects' public speaking apprehension levels will be reduced as a result of experiencing self-confrontation [having their speech presentations videotaped and then played back and discussed in class by the course instructor] as a part of the public speaking instructional process.

METHOD

Data were collected from two samples using a repeated measures design. In one sample 112 undergraduates enrolled in introductory public speaking classes completed the Personal Report of Public Speaking Apprehension (PRPSA) (McCroskey, 1970; McCroskey and Richmond, 1982) at two different intervals. The PRPSA is a Likert-type self-report

instrument which measures public speaking anxiety exclusively. The first completion of the instrument preceded any in-class public speaking activities, while the second completion of the instrument came after each subject delivered four in-class speeches.

The other sample involved 56 undergraduates also enrolled in introductory public speaking classes. The first completion of the PRPSA preceded any in-class public speaking activities, while the second completion of the instrument came after each subject delivered four in-class public speeches that were videotaped. Each subject viewed the video playback of each of her/his four speech performances following each speech presentation with the videotape being viewed and discussed in-class by the course instructor. The discussion encompassed basic content and delivery issues and did not involve the discussion of grades earned. The public speaking classes participating in this study were taught by several different full-time (tenure track) faculty members. The average reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) for the PRPSA was .910.

RESULTS

Data Analyses

A 2x2 ANOVA was computed and revealed that the main effect of all subjects as differentiated by pre and posttests was significant ($F = 12.84$, $df = 1,167$, $p<.000$). No other significant differences were found. [A 2x2 ANCOVA was additionally computed, measuring the difference between subjects involved with self-confrontation and subjects not involved with self-confrontation on posttest PRPSA scores, arithmetically adjusting for the pretest scores. No significant difference was found.] A layered post hoc analysis using the Newman-Keuls

procedure indicated a significant difference for pre to posttest scores for only the subjects not involved with self-confrontation (4.3 w/critical value = 4.17, $p<.01$). The difference involved a reduction in these subjects' public speaking apprehension levels. No other significant differences were found using the Newman-Keuls procedure.

A stepwise multiple linear regression analysis was computed to determine the relationship between demographic variables (sex, age, educational classification [freshman, sophomore, etc.], grade expectation [reported by subjects on both pre and posttests and later coded as constant, increased or decreased expectation], teacher evaluation [each subject responded to the same posttest teacher evaluation item—"Overall, this teacher is among the best teachers I have known" — by selecting one of five response choices ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree"], and section) and "PRPSA change" [difference between subjects' pre and posttest scores]. The results of the regression analysis indicated that the proportion of the criterion variance that was accounted for by the demographics (predictor variables) was small ($R = .0987$ or 10% — when all variables were entered).

DISCUSSION

The results indicated that subjects' public speaking apprehension levels were susceptible to change in the introductory public speaking instructional context. The use of self-confrontation as a public speaking apprehension reduction strategy did not prove useful, however. The significant F value, and, even more importantly, the Newman-Keuls critical value reported in this study indicated that the repeated experience of presenting public speeches may have served as an intervening variable that invoked the change, while self-confrontation appeared to inhibit the reduction of communication apprehension. Recent related research regarding the

use of video-modeling as an instructional intervention for reducing student *pre-performance* public speaking anxiety produced similar results (Newburger & Hemphill, 1992). Newburger and Hemphill concluded that "the narrower range of acceptable behavior produced by the provision of both audio and visual sensory input may have heightened subjects' concerns about evaluation, performance, and self-related issues" (p. 77; see also — Daly, Vangelisti, Neel, & Cavanaugh, 1989). Certainly, the provision of both audio and visual sensory input associated with subjects' own speech presentations can potentially significantly heighten the subjects' self-related concerns.

Future research might consider the methodology employed for integrating self-confrontation in the public speaking instructional environment. In this study, after a group of speakers presented their assigned speeches both the speakers and their classmates viewed the video replays of their speech performances and a discussion concerning the presentations (lead by the class instructor) followed. In the control group the only difference in the use of class time was the absence of the self-confrontation dimension. Alternative approaches for employing the self-confrontation strategy (e.g., allowing speech presenters to privately view their performances outside of class; or having speech presenters coached during the viewing process by an informed tutor [who may or may not be an instructor, graduate assistant, or peer]) may produce different results (e.g., see Morreale, 1992).

An issue raised by Newburger & Hemphill (1992) is relevant for this investigation. They stressed that "future research should consider whether student speech performances qualitatively improve as an outcome of being confronted to the *video-modeling instructional strategy* (the same issue applies to the use of self-confrontation), despite the possibility that their anxiety levels may not be correspondingly reduced. The belief that nervousness can actually be used to the advantage of speech presenters is widely held" (p.

78). The assessment of public speaking apprehension levels is concerned with affective learning (feelings, attitudes, motivation). The "Speech and Thought Curriculum" course described earlier has multiple objectives associated with the cognitive, behavioral, affective, and ethical learning domains — and corresponding assessment methodologies are employed to facilitate individual student gains across the learning dimensions.

Previous support exists that the use of self-confrontation as an instructional intervention can result in improvement in performance *skills* (behavioral learning domain). Mulac (1974) found, for example, that students experienced gains in speaking skill when the self-confrontation instructional intervention was employed. Additionally, Sorenson & Pickett (1986) found that significant skills-based gains "are made when videotaped feedback is combined with other strategies such as practice interviews, discussions, models, lectures, and behavior modification" (p.13).

The alternative view held by some instructors of the introductory public speaking course, that a major objective of the course should be to instill a greater measure of confidence in students concerning their future public speaking activities, is also worthy of consideration. Many students enrolled in an introductory public speaking course are fulfilling an undergraduate academic requirement and it may be the only such course they will ever take. Should they leave the course as more competent communicators who are relieved to "never again have to give a speech?" One could argue the case that public speaking anxiety reduction could be as important as corresponding skill development. At this point, basic course instructors wishing to employ self-confrontation as an instructional intervention specifically intended to reduce their students' speech anxiety should consider that research to date paints a muddy picture regarding whether this objective will be met. Careful consideration of the specific methodology for employing this instructional intervention should be a prominent concern.

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Computer-Mediated Communication in the Basic Communication Course

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INTRODUCTION

From 1987 through 1992, the authors employed computer-mediated communication (CMC) for delivery and support of a basic communication course in group problem solving. This course, SpComm-350, was one of the 101 winners of an EDUCOM Joe Wyatt Challenge award for successful application of technology to instruction.

The goal of the course was to teach students to participate in group discussion (committee work). It was an active participation course. We chose to use CMC augmented by video because 1) many courses of this sort are top heavy with theoretical lecturing and participation is kept to a minimum, and 2) individual contact with a senior instructor is difficult when more than 200 students are enrolled and 3) prejudicial aspects involved in instructor/student relationships often bias evaluation and critique. The inability of the professor to reach campus provided the initial impetus to think in terms of automated instruction. The course was administered in four sections of 50 each, nominally directed by a graduate assistant. Students were divided into independent task groups of approximately seven members each.

The approach used in the design and development of SpComm-350 has since been adapted to other courses, and

today over 100 Penn State courses are using CMC to support course communication. One feature of this approach is that it is platform-independent. It is easily surviving the transition from mainframe-based systems to client/server networked systems.

The preceding paragraph is important. Many attempts at computer augmentation fail because the technology is beyond the grasp of the user. The term "user friendly" is often an excuse for trivialization. Our goal was to assist students in taking advantage of the most sophisticated aspects of computer mediated communication.

Our initial effort resulted from a rather practical problem. Declining health of the course Professor prevented him from commuting to campus and maintaining necessary contact with his students. Out of this problem we set our goals to explore ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the basic communication course. It was easy for us to agree on the deficiencies specified above. What we learned is applicable to communication instruction (i.e.., skills-based instruction) in general, as well as to computer-based instruction and distance education in other disciplines. Much of what we learned was from simple day-to-day experience, and is not yet grounded in empirical research. However, based on student/instructor feedback and student product, the approach generally succeeds in meeting its goals. We fully expect current and future research to provide bases for why it works, and in which situations it is applicable. At the moment, we see no reason why this form of instruction would not be useful in public speaking courses. There are, of course, hundreds of examples of its use in English composition.

We began development of SpComm-350 with a few assumptions regarding skills-based instruction. First, we determined that the effectiveness of the basic communication course comes down to a process of performance and critique. The student performs, criticism is provided by the instructor, and the student modifies performance based on the criticism.

This results in the student developing a set of heuristics on which to base performance in various situations. We determined that communication theory, while useful in explaining how these heuristics work, is secondary to the task of helping the student develop the heuristics, and therefore the desired skill.

Second, we determined that the best use of instructor time is in evaluating performance and providing the student with thoughtful critique. Time spent lecturing, or rehashing the contents of textbooks, is largely wasted and would be better spent in direct performance evaluation with students.

SPEECH COMMUNICATION 350 — GROUP PROBLEM-SOLVING

SpComm-350 involved approximately 200 students per semester, one Professor, two assistant instructors and a small group of graduate students. Students were assigned to small groups (5-7 persons each) and assigned a problem task. Their goal was to work as a group in the completion of the task. The task changed each semester, and tasks were intentionally selected to be vague, to force the groups to define and structure their work. Eventually, the groups had to produce a formal written report on some problem/issue as well as provide a review/critique of their own work. To do this, it was essential that they work in groups and assign tasks. In order for us to evaluate process and "trouble shoot" groups having difficulties, we regularly administered Bales and Cohen SYMLOG, so that we could spot factions, cliques, isolates, leadership, etc. and provide appropriate feedback to the groups. This could be done on line and did not require the biasing presence of an instructor monitoring the groups. Thus, the natural state of the group was not modified.

The course Professor addressed the students via videotape periodically, offering briefings on the task only. Briefings were

terse, humorous, explicit. All theory (as warranted) was contained in the text. Graduate assistants served as traffic directors, referring questions to the instructor and helping students with Email problems. They also evaluated projects. The instructor was only available to the students through electronic mail. Group meeting logs, progress reports and other task deliverables were handled entirely through electronic mail. Questions regarding task specifics, and critique of deliverables, were also handled through electronic mail.

Assistant instructors handled recitation meetings with the students and provided some guidance on relating the textbook material to the problem-solving process. They, and the graduate students, observed group process and wrote logs which were also transmitted electronically to the Professor.

Reference 'experts' were available to the student groups through electronic mail. In some cases these experts were the textbook authors, in other cases they were persons with relevant expertise in some area related to the group task. Sometimes the reference expert was local, but usually they were at another University or institution hundreds or thousands of miles away.

Some task deliverables were shared with other groups by posting them to a private conferencing area. This conferencing area (based on Usenet NEWS) also provided for class-wide discourse outside of class meetings.

Overall, SpComm-350 was designed to simulate the way problem tasks are assigned to groups in industry. The groups were given a great deal of latitude in the completion of tasks, subject to the required deliverables and critique from the Professor and assistant instructors. The assistant instructors essentially played the role of middle management while the Professor played the role of a company CEO. Tasks were relevant to students' needs like recommendations for improvement of students health service, programming on the local university radio and TV stations, and design of literacy and remediation courses. Students were also required to devise a

method for grading individual performance (criteria: 1/3 A, 1/3 B, 1/3 C) plus an appellate system. Students were evaluated on the systems they devised (even when they decided to "draw lots.") Individual grade represented 20% of total grade. Midterm on text also was 20%. The remainder of the grade was collective. All written work was graded by the senior instructor and the grad assistant in charge. The grad assistance was weighted 2/1 over the supervising instructor.

When SpComm-350 was first offered, CMC instructional support was a relatively new idea. Although electronic mail had been used in the sciences for years, this was the first large-scale attempt at using it to support a skills-based liberal arts course. Our biggest challenge was to make the technology as transparent as possible for the students. It had to be both easy and practical. It had to be a tool that empowered the groups to complete their tasks rather than being (as some feared) an impediment. Over the 6 years that SpComm-350 was taught with CMC support, the results showed that it was indeed effective. Student performance and group product showed a small, but definite, improvement over traditional group problem-solving instruction. Students and instructors felt that they had better interactions overall, even though they had no face-to-face contact with the Professor and little face-to-face contact with the instructors.

For example, over half of the students took advantage of regular contact with the Professor via CMC. Fewer than half of the students made any attempt to meet with the instructors during scheduled office hours. This demonstrated that students found CMC contact preferable to often inconvenient face-to-face meetings once they had achieved competency with the CMC client programs.

To test the efficacy of the course, written projects similar to those used in live-instruction courses were evaluated by outside panels of experts who agreed that the work in the computer-based classes was equal or better than that of classes using live instruction. The student populations in each

case were the "same." (Or as "same" as possible in a university community.)

The majority of the students had no difficulty with the CMC client programs. This was due in part to our effort to use generic clients as much as possible. Rather than customizing the software, we put our efforts into training and support for tools that the students might have already had some experience with, or would be able to use in other courses. Workshops were periodically provided for those who wanted further instruction. Furthermore, each group was assured one "sophisticated" computer operator so they were not handicapped in their communication. The conferencing component of the CMC system obviated the need for unnecessary lectures. Important questions, and the Professors response, could be posted for classwide consumption. Issues could be addressed as they emerged and when they were relevant. When students asked questions relevant to the common good, they were posted to public bulletin boards.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR CMC USE

When integrating CMC into any University course a number of issues must be considered well before the first class meeting. Some of these considerations will be 'givens' in the sense that they reflect the local computing environment. Other considerations will be design options affecting the format of the course and the specific uses of available technology. In most cases tradeoffs must be made between desirable functions and available services.

The Bottom Line

The most important initial consideration is what we term the 'bottom line.' This has to do with the reason CMC is being used in the course. In the opinion of the authors, CMC is

appropriate for course support only when it either solves recognized problems with the course or when it adds significant advantages for the students.

Unfortunately, many applications of technology to instruction amount to solutions in search of a problem to solve. This is not surprising, since the technology is evolving more quickly than our understanding of its application. System developers are creating 'tools' to explore what 'can be done,' course designers must ask themselves 'why should we do it?'

A real problem occurs when technology is added to a course for its own sake. It may be glitzy and fancy but will it really help the instructional process? Even worse, could the technology become an impediment to learning rather than an aid? Every few years a new technology is touted as revolutionizing the instructional process. However few, if any, revolutions have really occurred.

An example is with hypermedia. No one would doubt that hypermedia provides a fancy interactive way of viewing related data, but it has not demonstrated that this improves the students understanding of course material. In fact, it has been suggested that the opposite may be true due to the difficulty of easily scanning and locating specific information in hypermedia systems. Anyone doubting this should spend some time browsing the World Wide Web.

Recent experiments with hypermedia show a consistent NSD or inferiority when compared to traditional methods of instructions. This may be attributed to the "creativity" feature claimed by hypermedia designers. Hypermedia is structured by its designers in ways not necessarily accommodating the natural human ways of thinking. Consequently, it cannot guarantee coverage of subject matter. Its use in skills training is yet to be evaluated, although it appears that some form of visual experiences could be used to show desirable models of performance skills.

Accessibility

For CMC to be useful in a course, students and instructors must have convenient access to the CMC system. Students are unlikely to take advantage of CMC for course-related communication if it is inconvenient for them to get to a computer system and run the CMC clients. Likewise, instructors are unlikely to devote the time necessary to make use of the CMC system rewarding to their students if they do not have convenient access to a networked computer system. This situation becomes even more complex if hypermedia is used. The idea that the system cannot be the important feature of instruction is salient. If students are preoccupied with learning technology, they are distracted from the content of the course.

A number of approaches to the problem of accessibility have been tried. The most successful approach is one that provides at least 3 types of access. Public laboratories located conveniently across campus and open during hours convenient to the students will work for students who do not have their own computer systems. Building networks and faculty office computers provide convenient access for faculty daytime hours. At some universities these networks also include residence halls so student computers can be directly connected to the campus system. Dial-In systems offer remote access via modem and telephone lines for students and faculty to access CMC from the convenience of their homes.

Please note that the problem is not simply one of convenient access to 'a computer.' Given the rapid advancement in microcomputers and communications technology it is quite possible that students or faculty might not have access to the right type of computer or to the software necessary for CMC use. The best solution is one where the institution provides guidelines for computer system type and provides support for access to the networks and CMC services.

Institutional Strategy

Successful integration of CMC with any course can depend in large part on the Institutional strategy for instructional technology. For example, some institutions provide electronic mail accounts for all of their students during their entire matriculation. Courses that utilize these systems as part of their CMC groupware have the advantage that students will not need in-depth training in use of the tools in each course they take.

One of the presumptions underlying recommended uses of hypermedia is that the hardware is accessible to the student users. Whether this instruction is offered through hypercard, toolbook, or Internet technologies like gopher, WWW, or Mosaic, for the foreseeable future, slow processing, complex systems, and inadequate on line resources promise to retard application of hypermedia to solution of classroom problems. Remember that our focus is on using technology to solve classroom problems rather than the more Procrustean task of fitting technology to the classroom whether it belongs there or not.

Institutions providing campus-wide information systems such as gopher and the worldwide-web can use these as delivery systems for course 'virtual libraries.' These libraries allow an instructor to provide CMC access to text, programs, graphics, and any other object that can be stored in a computer file. (See postscript for a live example of this application.) Please keep in mind the imperative of accessibility, however, before becoming excessively excited about this form of instruction.

Training, documentation and support for individual CMC clients can be centralized and standardized, removing this burden from the instructor. Custom documentation and training that is provided by the instructor can be focused on the functional use of the tools in the course rather than on the

mechanics of the tools themselves. An ongoing dialog between instructors and the groups charged with providing centralized computer/network services and support can help to fine tune systems and procedures for maximum effectiveness.

This latter point should be stressed. Instructors seldom bother to provide computer/network support personnel with the information necessary to assist their students with system problems. When CMC is integrated with a course it also provides a splendid opportunity for the service and support providers to anticipate student needs. For example, course syllabi and project descriptions provided through a virtual library can also be available to support personnel, who then better understand how to assist students. We acknowledge the work of Profs. Lori Jackson at Cal Poly, Mary McComb at Marist College, and Robbie McKenzie at East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania in designing support systems, training workshops, and simple user documentation for our experimental courses, and refer you to them as consulting resources as you do your own designs.

Major Instructor Commitment

Early in the development of any course using CMC the instructor must lose the illusion that the technology will reduce their workload. In fact, for maximum effectiveness the instructor must make a major commitment to being a leader in the use of the system.

Planning for the course should involve the instructor working through all of the required exercises, using the same systems that will be available to the students. This way they will anticipate problems that their students may encounter. It is particularly important that a student develop faith that the instructor has experience with the same tools they are required to use in the course. This results in an empathy between student and instructor that can provide real encouragement for the student. Equally important is the recognition

that the subject instructor may not be technologically sophisticated. Genuine harmony between the instructor and the technical specialist is imperative for success in this form of instruction.

It is also very important for the instructor to regularly check for electronic mail or conference postings from students and to provide thoughtful answers as quickly as possible. In the SpComm-350 case students often received replies to their CMC queries within minutes. This clearly reinforced their positive impression of instructional CMC. While instantaneous response is clearly not feasible, the instructor must at least make a commitment to checking for student queries on a daily basis. Nothing can be more daunting to the student than to gain the impression that the instructor doesn't use the system herself.

In another CMC-supported course one of the authors (Santoro) provided weekly 'virtual professor' sessions where students could ask questions through an interactive chat system. The setup was frankly hokey, and provided more for fun than for pedagogical advantage, yet some students were excited enough by the application to devote time to practice with the CMC tools. The impression gained by the students was of a strong instructor commitment, which resulted in greater effort on the student's part.

Basically, the instructor of a CMC-supported course should expect to put more time into the course rather than less time. However that time commitment will result in better contact with students, and in a more rewarding instructional process. If there is a very large number of students, a teaching assistant or assistant instructor can be employed as front line of communication. Conferencing systems can also be employed to address questions in a coursewide forum rather than through one-on-one electronic mail. This can help foster class-related discourse as well as peer assistance.

SUMMARY

CMC, and other computer/communication technologies, have great potential for application to instruction. However, we need to think carefully about 'why' we are using technology. Will it really improve the educational experience or is it merely window dressing? In particular, we need to avoid creating problems for technology to solve simply because it is available.

Student acceptance of instructional CMC is key to its effectiveness. The degree of student acceptance is tailored by the design of the course and the instructor's commitment to it. Our experience has shown that CMC can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the basic communication course.

POSTSCRIPT

A live example of a virtual library is available for exploration. The library is for the authors LA-283 (Computer Applications in the Liberal Arts) course. You will need a gopher client or a WWW browser (such as Mosaic) to access this library.

If you are using a gopher client, point it at info.psu.edu port 70. If you are using a WWW browser, point it as url gopher://info.psu.edu/

Then, in both cases select the following menu entries:

- Information Servers at Penn State
  - FTP server ftp.cac.psu.edu
    - courses
      - la283

You will now be at the top level of the la-283 library disk. Send any comments to Gerry Santoro at gms@psuvm.psu.edu.

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Manuscripts concerned with introductory communication course research and pedagogy are invited. Priority consideration will be given to manuscripts submitted by January 1 for the next edition of the annual. Include a 75-100 word abstract and a separate author identification paragraph following the format of the annual. Each manuscript will initially receive three to four blind reviews. Remove any author identification information from the text of your submission. Editorial decisions should not be expected in less than 12-14 weeks.

Send four copies of your manuscript to:

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The Basic Communication Course Annual examines current introductory communication course research and pedagogical issues. Articles may be experimental, theoretical, or applied in nature. Each submission will be initially reviewed blindly by three manuscript reviewers. Additionally, the top competitive papers (one from the "research" program, the other from the "pedagogy" program) presented at SCA and sponsored by the Basic Course Commission will be published each year. Following established editorial policy, these papers will be published only after going through the professional review process that may require substantive revisions.